DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 125 486 HE 008 077

AUTHOR	Andrew, Loyd D.; Friedman, Burton D.
TITLE	A Study of the Causes for the Demise of Certain Small, Private, Liberal Arts Colleges in the United States.
INSTITUTION	Virginia Polytechnic Inst. and State Univ., Blacksburg. Dept. of Education.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	May 76
CONTRACT	300-75-0376
NOTE	327p.
AVAILABLE FROM	College of Education, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$18.07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Case Studies; *College Role; Educational Economics; Educational Finance; Educational History; *Financial Problems; Government Role; *Higher Education; *Liberal Arts; *Private Colleges

ABSTRACT

In seeking to determine causes for the demise of certain small liberal arts colleges a panel of experts were consulted, extensive review of literature was conducted, 10 different colleges that had closed or merged were investigated, and HEGIS data were analyzed. Chapters cover: (1) a review of the historical and current role of the small private liberal arts college; (2) case studies of 10 colleges that closed or merged; (3) analysis of financial ratios of demise and live invisible colleges; and (4) a position paper on governmental intervention. Findings suggest that the small, private, liberal arts college is in serious difficulty, in part because of state and federal policies that have fostered the growth of public higher education. (Author/KE)

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A Study of the Causes for the Demise
of Certain Small, Private, Liberal Arts Colleges
in the United States
Loyd D. Andrew VPI & SU

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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HE 008077

Final Report

A Study of the Causes for the Demise of Certain Small, Private, Liberal Arts Colleges in the United States

by

Loyd D. Andrew

Burton D. Friedman

May, 1976

College of Education

Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Produced for the U. S. Office of Education
Contract Number 300-75-0376

Foreword

This is a final report on a "Study of the Causes of the Demise of Certain Small, Private, Liberal Arts Colleges," sponsored by the United States Office of Education.

The report consists of six chapters. Chapter I is an executive summary of the background of the study, scope and methodology, findings, and conclusions and recommendations. Chapters II through VI contain the following, respectively:

II. A review of the historical and current role of the small, private liberal arts college.

III. Case studies of ten colleges which closed or merged.

IV. The characteristics of the demise and live invisible colleges.

V. Analysis of financial ratios of demise and live invisible colleges.

VI. A position paper on Governmental Intervention: Policy and Constraints.

The appendices contain: operating ratios for both live and closed or merged colleges, an outline of the procedure used in the field studies of the ten colleges, a list of definitions of terms used elsewhere in the report, and an extensive bibliography, relating to higher education.

Acknowledgements

Many have been involved in the development of the study. What has been accomplished would not have been possible without their cooperation in providing information and insights on the small college.

Ten field investigations of colleges which closed or merged have been completed and are discussed in Chapter III. In all of these investigations, the administrators, faculty, and students whom we interviewed were frank and cooperative in supplying information, and suggesting hypotheses for the troubles that haunted their institutions into closure or merger. To prevent possible embarassment to these sources, we have chosen to thank them as a group, rather than by name.

At the start of the study, a Panel of Experts was created by Dr. Robert Huff, the initial program director. It must be one of the most knowledgeable, honest and helpful panels that was ever drawn together. The members of the panel are:

Dr. Carmen L. Battaglia
Assistant Regional Commissioner for
Post-Secondary Education

Mr. William Gescheider
Director, Planning Staff
Bureau of Post-Secondary Education

Dr. Robert F. Cramer
President, Carroll College

Dr. Richard Jonsen
Assistant Dean, School of Education
Syracuse University

Dr. E. W. Lautenschlager
Dean, Roanoke College

Mr. James W. Moore
U. S. Office of Education

Rev. Msgr. John F. Murphy
Executive Secretary, College and
University Department, National
Catholic Education Association

Dr. William L. Proctor
President, Flagler College

Dr. William Jellema
President, Wartburg College

Dr. Gary H. Quehl
President, Council for the Advancement
of Small Colleges

Dr. William A. Shoemaker
Council for the Advancement of
of Small Colleges

Dr. Elden T. Smith
Executive Secretary, National
Council of Independent Colleges
and Universities

Dr. John Wilson
Vice President for Academic Affairs,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and
State University

Many at VPI & SU contributed greatly to the success of this project, but the following faculty merit special thanks: Drs. Burton D. Friedman, Thomas C. Hunt and Marybelle Rockey. The following members of the panel, Drs. Battaglia, Jonsen, Proctor, Cramer, Lautenschlager, Monsignor John F. Murphy and James W. Moore were involved in several of the case studies. Dr. Jimmy Fortune, William M. Anderson, Jr., and Janice McBee are responsible for the excellent statistical analysis. Lois Beeken assisted the Project Director and she and Mary B. Giles compiled the data for the comparisons of invisible colleges. All of the writers and editors are particularly grateful to the secretarial staff consisting of Bonnie Chandler, Renee Chandler, Sandy Steel, Janet Jones, and Carol Fleeger.

Karl Hereford, Dean of the College of Education, was helpful in suggesting avenues of inquiry and, Dr. Wayne Worner, Division Chairman in the college, cleared the decks for action.

Table of Contents

FOREWORD

CHAPTER I Executive Summary - L. D. Andrew I.1

- Background I.2
  - Organization of the Report I.3
- Economic and Social Factors Affecting the "Small College" I.4
  - Competition I.6
- Methodology I.7
  - Case Study Approach I.8
  - Analysis of HEGIS Data I.9
- Findings I.10
  - National Resource I.10
  - Plight - External Factors I.11
  - Diversity and Classification I.12
  - Indicators of Pathology I.13
  - Small Enrollments I.13
  - Cost Per Student I.14
  - Financial Indicators I.14
  - Internal Causes Leading to Demise I.15
- Conclusions and Recommendations I.16
  - Recommendations I.19

CHAPTER II A Prospective on the Small Liberal Arts College - R. W. Jonsen II.1

CHAPTER III Field Studies

- Introduction III.1
- The Closing of Alpha College and Its Consolidation with Omega University - R. W. Jonsen, J. F. Murphy III.1
- Beta College: Did it Close? - T. C. Hunt III.17
- Why Gamma University Closed: Some Suppositions - L. A. Beeken III.27
- Delta College: A Community Effort That Failed - M. C. Rockey III.39
- Management Can Make a Difference: The Death and Rebirth of a Small, Private, Liberal Arts College - L. D. Andrew III.46
- The Birth and Death of Three Small, Private, Liberal Arts Colleges--the Effect on Higher Education - L. D. Andrew III.60
- Iota University: State Aid to Private Education - B. D. Friedman III.68
- Mu College - B. D. Friedman III.75

CHAPTER IV	Introduction - J. F. Murphy	IV.i
	Characteristics of Demise and Live Invisible Colleges - L. Beeken and M. Giles	IV.1
CHAPTER V	Analysis of Financial Ratios of Demise and Live Invisible Colleges - W. Anderson, J. McBee, and L. Beeken	V.1
CHAPTER VI	Governmental Intervention: Needs and Constraints - B. D. Friedman	VI.1

APPENDICES

Ratios of Demise Institutions (omitted)	A.1
Ratios of Invisible Institutions (omitted)	B.1
Field Study Guide	C.1
Definitions	D.1
Bibliography	E.1

CHAPTER I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A SEARCH FOR THE UNDERLYING CAUSES FOR THE DEATH OF CERTAIN SMALL, PRIVATE, LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

by Loyd Andrew

There are many explanations offered for the decline of the small, private, liberal arts college. It is a certainty that the role of the small college in higher education has declined precipitously since 1950, when approximately half of the students in higher education were enrolled in private institutions, most of which were small. Now, the private sector has fewer than 25 percent of the students in higher education and the market share of the "small college" is only seven percent. These small institutions were the fountainhead of higher education in the United States. They still provide much of the diversity in higher education. The plight of this important sector of higher education led the President of the United States to express his concern. In a memorandum to the U. S. Commissioner, the President wrote:

> In a conversation with me several weeks ago, four university professors urged me to pay special attention to the plight of the small, private, liberal arts colleges.
>
> As you are aware, many face unusual financial hardships and some of the finest may be in danger of having to close. This same point came up recently with representatives of the higher education community.
>
> These colleges represent a valuable national resource, and I want to be informed accurately and thoroughly about the facts of their situation and what steps might be taken to be helpful.
>
> Will you please look into this for me and report your findings as soon as it is consistent with the complexity of the problem.
>
> Signed: Gerald R. Ford (April 9, 1975)

As one part of its effort to answer the questions raised by the President, the U. S. Office of Education requested higher education experts at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI&SU) to study "Causes for the Demise of Small, Private, Liberal Arts Colleges." This is a report on the study which involved: (1) review of professional and historical literature on these colleges in the United States; (2) brief analysis of broad economic and market trends in the U. S. and their effect on private higher education in general and the small, private, liberal arts college in particular; (3) field investigations of a selected group of liberal arts institutions that closed during the period 1970-75; (4) statistical analysis of HEGIS data describing the private liberal arts colleges in the United States; and (5) sampling of opinion from college officials and from students.

BACKGROUND

For several years, the role of private colleges--and of the small, private, liberal arts college, in particular--in higher education has declined. This decline has been a cause for concern because of the colleges' economic contribution to higher education, their historic role and, not least, the contribution they make to the diversity of higher education. Since 1970, approximately 60 small, private, liberal arts colleges have closed or merged with public or private institutions, though estimates vary because of the many different definitions of what constitutes a small, private, liberal arts college. Certain authorities have estimated that as many as eighty colleges have fallen by the wayside. In this report, 59 colleges that closed or merged since 1970 were considered to have met a reasonably strict definition of small, private, liberal arts college. For example, seminaries were excluded from the study. However, at least three colleges that were included perhaps might have been better characterized as private, non-profit professional schools. Several institutions have also been included which were founded by orders of the Catholic church for the training of women religious. These colleges had a limited purpose. Perhaps they should have been excluded. However, these exclusions do not materially affect comparative data that suggests that the small liberal arts college is in difficulty. It is estimated that the recent rate of failure is nearly four times what it was between 1966 and 1970 and the ratio of births to deaths has also declined. From 1966 to 1970, 119 colleges opened and only 19 closed, a ratio of 6 to 1. From 1970 to 1975, this ratio declined to 1.5 to 1.

Organization of the Report

This chapter briefly summarizes the major points of the study. It includes a brief examination of social and economic factors affecting the small college as well as a short description of the methodologies that were used (1) to develop case studies of certain colleges which closed or merged with other institutions and (2) to analyze Higher Education General Information System (HEGIS) data to determine if the data would provide indicators of health or sickness.

The major portion of the chapter is concerned with summarizing the studies reported in subsequent chapters and the conclusion and recommendations that follow from these studies.

Chapter II is a historical review of the contribution of the small, private, liberal arts college to higher education. Chapter III contains reports on nine field studies of small colleges that closed or merged during the seventies. These field studies have provided invaluable insights on the complexity of the small college problem and the underlying causes for the demise of certain small colleges.

Chapter IV discusses the characteristics of those colleges which died during the seventies.

Chapter V contains a detailed description of the statistical techniques that were used in analyzing HEGIS data as well as the results of this analysis. In addition, the implications of certain operating ratios are examined.

Chapter VI is a situation paper regarding the matter of possible governmental intervention to preserve the private sector of higher education.

The last part of the report contans several appendices and an extensive bibliography.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE "SMALL COLLEGE"

Historically, the "small college" has had a relatively high rate of births and deaths. Many small colleges in the past, as in the present and near-present, were founded to meet a specific need or to serve a particular value orientation. Many were underfinanced from the beginning. It is the nature of specialized and small institutions (unlike large and diverse organizations) to pass away when their services are no longer relevant. For example, it is estimated that 891 colleges were founded between 1770 and 1870 and that 650 of these died. (Hodgkinson, 1971)

In a sense, the historic and current rate of births and deaths of small colleges speaks well for the dynamics and vitality of United States society. Moreover, given the current economic, social, and political pressures on the small college, the rate of change in societal values, and the limited resources of many small colleges, it is remarkable that the rate of failure is not higher. Clearly, this sector of higher education is still viable and respected.

While private education's share of the higher education market declined from 50 percent in 1950 to less than 25 percent in 1970, the number of students that it served increased from 1.1 million to 2.1 million. Much of the public sector growth occurred as a result of emphasis on mass higher education.

The major enrollment growth in both public and private higher education occurred prior to 1970. From 1960 to 1965, enrollment increased by 28 percent in the private sector and by 67 percent in public four-year institutions; from 1965 to 1970, enrollment grew only 11 percent in the private sector in comparison to 47 percent in the public sector. From 1970 to 1974, enrollment increased approximately four percent in private four-year institutions as compared to 13 percent in public four-year institutions.

To meet the demands of new segments of society and new types of students for higher education, state and federal governments provided resources and built a great number of institutions, widely dispersed geographically. Thus, almost unlimited access to higher education has been provided by wide dispersion of institutions, financial aid programs, and changes in standards of admissions and retention.

The growth of higher education facilities, faculty, administration, and bureaucracy reached its zenith about the time that birth rates declined and the baby boom wave passed. In addition, higher education lost some of its appeal to youth as a result of changes in economic and social factors, including the termination of the draft and Vietnam war. As a result, enrollment growth declined just when both public and private institutions had become equipped to accommodate past growth rates and had therefore developed the need for continued growth.

Public institutions appear to have developed more thoroughly than private institutions the appropriate bureaucracy, need, and capability to recruit both resources and students. Production capacity as well as need can create a market. Moreover, the public institutions have developed more experience and capability in marketing to new clienteles, e.g., to non-traditional students. The public institution's need to grow may be greater than private institutions. Public systems more than private ones, it is alleged, can revitalize themselves only by growing, because public funding is tied to enrollment. In the public sector, at least, society has yet to design satisfactory systems for revitalizing staff other than by "bringing in new blood."

Thus, the rate of competition for students and resources between the public and private institutions has quickened in the last few years. The competitive advantage appears to be with the public institutions. They are now geographically dispersed. They have competitive admission standards at both the low and top end of the scales. Earlier these two factors provided the private sector important competitive advantages. They no longer do.

Competition

Finally, most public institutions have a competitive advantage in tuition rates with all but the most highly endowed private institutions. HEGIS data suggest that the majority of private institutions earn 70 to 80 percent of their operating revenue from tuition. In comparison, tuition provides approximately 25 percent of operating revenues at most public institutions.

Private institutions thus, are left with only a few competitive advantages. First is the matter of size. A great number of students still appear to be much more comfortable in small institutions of 500 to 2500 enrollment. Second, and a close runner-up to the first, is the specialized or unique value orientation that many small colleges provide. There value orientations run the gamut from fundamental religion to avant garde social customs. Other alleged advantages include the quality of teaching and advisement; small class size, particularly at the lower division levels; and the selectivity of certain institutions on the basis of one or more such criteria as the following: income, social class, race, religion, and/or academic achievement. Public institutions tend to be non-competitive in this area.

METHODOLOGY

In seeking to determine causes for the demise of certain small liberal arts colleges, four distinct approaches were used and have been synthesized as well as possible, given the scope of the project. First, a panel of experts--drawn primarily from small, private, liberal arts colleges--was consulted for their insights. Second, an extensive review of the voluminous literature on higher education was conducted. Third, ten different colleges that had closed or merged were investigated and case studies on nine were developed. The field investigation of New College in Sarasota, Florida confirmed the findings of David Reisman's (1975) excellent study of that institution. There seemed to be no point in repeating what had already been said so well and accurately. The thrust of the Reisman article supports many of the conclusions that were drawn from the project's field investigations. Fourth, HEGIS data were analyzed.

Case Study Approach

Several different approaches were considered for doing field investigations. One approach is to use a Q-sort technique, in which those who were involved in the events leading up to the closing or merger of a college are asked to sort in order of probability a number of cards, each of which identifies a different cause for the demise. This technique lends itself to statistical analysis. If the sample is large and homeogeneous enough, one may be able to identify, at some level of significance, what is the general opinion for the cause of demise. Unfortunately general opinion may not represent an expert evaluation of the problems. This approach was attempted in a parallel study by another institution. No significant level of agreement on cause was obtained. (Vance Peterson, University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio)

A second approach, one generally favored in evaluating a business to determine the reasons for its success or failure, is that of case study, most thoroughly developed for analytical purposes by business administration, social anthropology, and sociology. This method of research has been very fruitful. Several techniques are used, including financial analysis, evaluation of marketing techniques, assessment of feelings, recording and evaluation of behavior, etc. The approach, of course, is quite dependent on the skill and knowledge of the investigator as an interviewer and on his ability to synthesize the results of his interviews with well-established theory. Generally, interviews and synthesis are guided by hypotheses developed from theory and practice. These hypotheses are continuously refined and added to during the case study or field investigation process.

The problem with this approach in the study of dead institutions is that many artifacts may have been lost, behavior no longer can be observed, and the persons involved in events that led up to the demise may no longer be available for interview.

Nevertheless, the case study approach was selected for the field investigations of a selected number of institutions because of its usefulness in "getting at causes" and the experience of the investigators. The institutions to be studied were chosen by the panel of experts. The selection was based on the characteristics that are described in Chapter 4, since the scope of the project precluded the use of a large sample.

The artifacts for the case studies were catalogs, self-studies, brochures, newspaper accounts, histories, and in certain cases, financial statements or analyses. In most cases it was possible to interview a recent president of the institution and, in the case of merged institutions, his successors. In most cases, trustees were interviewed. Other interviewees included deans, students, and faculty. Prior to conducting the case studies, several hypotheses were developed with the help of the panel of experts and appropriate literature and a questionnaire was written to guide the interviews (See Appendix C). To strengthen the reliability of the study and reduce the effect of interviewer bias, several different interviewers were recruited from the panel of experts as well as the faculty of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Generally, the interviews were conducted by two interviewers. selected on the basis of complementary background and biases.

Analysis of HEGIS Data

An intensive analysis was made of the data in the Higher Education General Information System (HEGIS) to determine if these data would provide an indicator of health or sickness. Operating ratios are quite commonly used by financial analysts in evaluating the relative health of an industry or specific business within the industry. Business experience plus work by the National Commission for Higher Education Management Systems, Bowen, and others provided guidance in developing a group of 30 operating ratios. This group was narrowed to 16 after consulting with the panel of experts. These operating ratios are listed and discussed in Chapter V. Means, median, standard deviation and ranges of the operating ratios for the dead and live populations were determined after individual ratios had been computed for each school on the base year of 1973. Discriminant and Baker cluster analyses were used to determine if any single ratio or group of ratios would discriminate between dead institutions and live institutions.

FINDINGS

National Resource

A review of the literature (see Chapter 2) supports the position that the small, private, liberal arts college is an important national resource, economically and philosophically. Approximately 25 percent of those enrolled in higher education attend private institutions. Seven percent of these or approximately 650,000 are in small, private, liberal arts colleges. The economic contribution of private higher education is substantial. Tuition provided 70 to 80% of the educational and general (E & G) costs of these institutions, whereas, the contribution of students in public institutions averages perhaps a third as much. The remaining operating costs of private institutions are supported by private gifts and endowment income except in a few states where state governments provide substantial subsidies. Publicly supported institutions, on the other hand, depend primarily on state appropriations from general revenue to supply the difference between tuition and total operating costs. Capital investments of private institutions are provided for almost solely by gifts and endowments or out of operations, whereas the majority of the capital costs of public institutions are borne by the taxpayer; in both sectors of higher education, auxiliary enterprises, such as housing, are generally self-supporting.

The philosophical, political and sociological contributions of private higher education to the vigor of higher education as a whole may be as important as its economic contribution, though these contributions cannot be quantified. Clark Kerr (1972) has observed that private higher education protects the autonomy of the public institution. This protection is badly needed, considering the strong tendency for ever increasing state and federal control.

The private sector offers a diversity in program and value orientation that the public sector apparently cannot supply. It provides an alternative means of education for many who for different reasons would find public universities uncomfortable. It has substantial economic and cultural value to many local communities. It competes with public higher education; hence it should encourage innovation and relevancy in both sectors.

Plight - External Factors

There is strong evidence that the private sector of higher education is in more serious difficulty than the public sector even though both now are facing increasing economic difficulties. Bowen's study suggests that 25 percent of the private institutions he studied faced serious financial difficulty (Bowen & Minter, 1975). Several state-sponsored studies provide supporting data. An analysis of HEGIS data suggests that 14 percent of live institutions in the HEGIS category 3.2 are in serious difficulty. The one to four tuition gap between the public and private sectors of higher education probably will continue to increase due to a combination of factors: inflation, limited private giving, and faltering endowment income, which has not grown sufficiently to cover the inflationary growth of operating and capital costs. The estimated average tuition of public institutions was $541 in 1974-75 as compared to $2080 in private institutions. The cost of attendance for resident students was $2400 in public institutions as compared to $4039 in private colleges (Coughlin, 1976).

The increasing gap in tuition eventually must affect enrollment. It already has had serious effects on individual schools. There are indications that too many private institutions are heavily subsidizing enrollment through financial aid packages that include tuition waivers and/or refunds (see Chapter V); many institutions lack the financial sophistication to balance such subsidies against incremental costs. As already noted, the historic advantages of the private sector in competing with the public sector are declining. Private colleges no longer have any significant advantage stemming from their goegraphical dispersion or their service as an alternative source of higher education for the low achiever. They lack experience in competing for the non-traditional and adult student, though some private institutions are exploiting this market successfully.

Diversity and Classification

The amazing diversity of what have been classified as small, private, liberal arts colleges is described in Chapter IV. It appears that both the Carnegie Commission classification and the HEGIS classification 3.2 (Private, Liberal Arts Colleges II) are much too large. They really encompass all those colleges not suitably classified elsewhere. Both classifications include colleges with many different characteristics, missions, affiliations, enrollments, and financial standings.

The weakness of the classification system and the shortcomings of data create many problems in analyzing the colleges' contribution as a national resource, in identifying critical indicators of institutional pathology, and in considering possible strategies that might preserve colleges that are making a significant contribution to higher education as a national resource. HEGIS data provide a base or beginning point for developing a useful taxonomy despite problems with credibility and accuracy. However, other data are needed, e.g., information on students, mission, programs, faculty and administration. There is a remarkable lack of current, reliable and specific information on the above.

Indicators of Pathology

One of the major purposes of the study was to determine if HEGIS data would be useful in developing indicators of pathology, thereby providing means for identifying the state of health of the small college sector.

The results of the analysis of HEGIS data were mixed. Comparison of enrollment and certain other data for the dead and live institutions indicated that colleges with certain characteristics are more likely to fail than others.

Small Enrollments. Sixty-six percent of the colleges that closed or merged in the last five years had 500 or less enrollment when they closed. Moreover, these colleges comprised 24.5 percent of the invisible population (live and dead) with less than 500 students. In contrast, only five percent of the colleges with enrollment greater than 500 failed.

Women's institutions also appear to have less viability than either male or coed institutions. Twenty-five percent of the total number of women's colleges in the 3.2 HEGIS category have failed in the last five years. These comprised 40 percent of the total demise population.

Cost Per Student

The average (E & G) costs per student of dead colleges was $4064, almost $1500 more than the live invisible college sector. The average cost per student of live invisible institutions is substantially below the costs of all private institutions, all public institutions, and all private, four-year institutions.

Financial Indicators. Sixteen financial or operating ratios were also developed from the HEGIS data. Several types of statistical analysis were used to determine if one or more of these operating ratios would be proven useful as indicators of pathology. Nine of the sixteen proved to be useful in discriminating between live and dead institutions. Stepwise discriminant analysis of these ratios classified the live and dead colleges correctly 84 percent of the time. By group, 69 and 86 percent of the dead and live invisible colleges respectively were classified correctly.

While this prediction rate is not good enough to support a recommendation that these operating ratios, developed from a single year of data, be used as indicators of pathology, it is high enough to encourage development of trend data, using several years of data.

There were indications that certain HEGIS data elements may be more accurate than is generally assumed, given the unaudited nature of the data and the manner in which the information is collected and reported by many institutions. However, some other data elements appear to be grossly inaccurate, perhaps due to faulty interpretations of the data element definitions by those charged with reporting to HEGIS.

The mis-classification of certain colleges by the stepwise discriminant analysis tend to support the findings of the certain field investigations that management and/or external and internal politics are critical factors (see in particular the case study, "The Death and Rebirth of a Small, Private, Liberal Arts College, Chapter 3). Two and probably three colleges which were investigated closed their doors by merger two to three years before their financial situation would have forced them to close.

The analysis of HEGIS data from the perspective of operating ratios strongly suggests that these data may have untapped analytical power, even at their present level of accuracy and credibility. It would appear that trend data on the operating ratios would provide means (a) for institutions to study themselves in comparison to their counterparts and (b) for U. S. Office of Education, among others, to appraise the health of colleges or categories of colleges. More intensive use of these data could well lead to more accurate reporting.

Internal Causes Leading to Demise

The field investigations of selected dead colleges strongly suggest that there are four internal factors that affect the health of an institution:

(1) Six of the ten studies found serious confusion and conflict

among constituencies of the colleges regarding purpose, mission, and/or value orientation.

(2) In five of the ten cases, the schools had been unable to obtain accreditation. In four cases, lack of accreditation was primarily attributable to an insufficient financial base. In the fifth case, difficulties with accreditation were a result of inadequate administration and conflict among constituencies.

(3) The financial base was insufficient to support the mission of the school, particularly in today's competitive environment.

(4) The administration or management lacked expertise. All but one of the schools were weak in objective setting and/or obtaining the commitment of faculty and staff to objectives, financial planning, needs assessment or market research, and marketing. The difference that management can make is described in the "Rebirth" study (Chapter 3). One school that appeared to have had several years of good management initiated and negotiated a successful merger with the state system at least three years before it would have collapsed financially and while it retained significant assets.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings suggest that the small, private, liberal arts college is in serious difficulty, in part because of state and federal policies which have fostered the growth of public higher education.

Small, private, liberal arts colleges have made and continue to make important contributions to higher education--economically, socially, and culturally. They provide diversity, competition with the public sector, reduce burdens on state revenues, and contribute to the economy and culture of local communities.

One of the reasons for the plight of the small, private, liberal arts college is the increasing tuition gap between the private and public sector. Current financial aid programs to students and institutional grants do not appear to address adequately the pricing problem.

Other reasons for the difficulties of the small college sector stem, in part, from the nature of the small college. Its size and specialized value orientation makes it particularly vulnerable to economic stress, competition and social change. Yet, general conditions do not account for all or many of the failures that were studied. Many of the dead colleges had been mismanaged in terms of determining and obtaining commitment to purpose, setting realistic missions and goals, and financial planning. Some of these colleges would have probably died even in the best of competitive worlds. Others had probably outlived their usefulness in terms of purpose and were unwilling or unable to change. The problems of mismanagement and usefulness are difficult ones to keep in perspective.

Since this study concentrated on an examination of defunct colleges, it is not surprising that it found many of the colleges' difficulties stemmed from internal factors, including inexperienced or inadequate management. Yet, poor management may be atypical of the population as a whole. Some of the investigators in peripheral and informal studies of live institutions found some very competent managers and management processes. The survival of so many institutions, given the competitive situation and amount of social change, supports the thesis that management of small colleges as a group may be quite competent. It is worth noting that the consequences of poor management and outdated purpose tend to become much more visible in the private than in the public sector. For example, miscalculation of building needs, and thus inadequate revenue to meet loans, can rapidly lead to bankruptcy in the private sector. The public sector is not so vulnerable. States tend to cover the debts of public institutions.

The study demonstrated that much more information is required for the development of sound policy regarding the small, private, liberal arts college. First, the classification is much too large. Second, too little is known about students, mission, staff, and the effects of church affiliation. Third, HEGIS data proved more useful and accurate than was generally expected by a panel of experts and other knowledgeable in the field. Operating ratios developed from one year of such data were able to predict accurately 84 percent of the time whether a college was dead or live. This suggests that several years of such data might provide trend data that would be useful to colleges for self-evaluation and to the U. S. Office of Education for policy analysis.

However, several important data elements in HEGIS appeared so unreasonable that the information was not used in the statistical analysis of operating ratios. This suggests that steps should be taken to improve the data base.

The field investigations proved extremely useful as a means of identifying underlying causes for demise. However, these studies were limited inasmuch as only dead colleges were investigated. Live and new colleges should be investigated to determine if there are significant differences between the management of live and successful institutions and dead ones. Such comparisons may explain some of the mis-classifications that were encountered in the statistical analysis of operating ratios.

Recommendations

The above conclusions lead to the following recommendations:

1. Current federal and state policies in respect to financial aid, institutional grants, and taxing should be reviewed to determine if these policies can be modified to provide fair competitive environment for the small, private, liberal arts college by reducing the effects of the tuition gap. Federal support funneled through the states could provide the states with more ability to support private higher education.

Federal and state tax structure should be reexamined to determine if it would be sound policy to increase incentives for private donations to higher education. Providing tax credit to parents and/or students for tuition should be considered.

2. Small colleges should keep their missions and management under serious and continuing examination to determine what can be done to increase their viability. They should give particular attention to meshing financial planning with academic planning and developing better processes for obtaining commitment of constituencies (not least faculty) to missions and goals.

3. There is a need for more analytical information to guide a serious debate on policy. Despite the massive literature on higher education, much of the information required to develop, implement, and adjust current policy is lacking, though the situation is much better than it was several years ago. Therefore, the following should be accomplished to provide the necessary information base for policy analysis.

(a) Several years of HEGIS data should be used in the form of operating ratios to support an analysis of trends. This trend data should be provided to the colleges for self-evaluation and used by the U. S. Office of Education (OE) for policy analysis.

(b) The use of HEGIS data by colleges and OE in itself would lead to better definition of data elements and reporting. However, positive means for improving the quality of data should be sought. For example, a sampling of HEGIS reports should be compared periodically to audited financial statements.

(c) Current, reliable, and specific data should be developed regarding the missions, programs, students, and staffs of the small colleges. Information should be obtained regarding the age, sex, geographic origin, socio-economic level, and academic level of students entering and attending the several categories of small colleges. Current knowledge on these matters is very limited. More is needed if a useful classification system is to be developed.

(d) Surveys should be conducted to determine the experience, education, management, style, salary, etc. of successful and unsuccessful managers.

4. HEGIS and other data as the above should be used to better define and classify the small, private, liberal arts college. This should lead to revision and refinements of HEGIS reporting systems and would thus assist in improving HEGIS as a primary information system. But most important, an improved taxonomy will provide for better policy and institutional analysis.

5. The case study approach used in this investigation has proved very informative despite the difficulties inherent in studies of defunct institutions. Additional case studies should be conducted with particular emphasis given to the study of live and new institutions.

These case studies should address such questions as the following:

a. How do management processes in the live institutions compare with those of defunct institutions:

   (1) Are the administrations more open or closed?

   (2) Is financial planning better coordinated with academic planning?

   (3) Are missions better defined and accepted?

   (4) Are trustees more involved in policy setting and less in day-to-day administration?

b. Do management processes of different sectors of small colleges differ according to church affiliations and/or missions and are these differences useful?

6. The nature of the small, private, liberal arts college as a national resource should be further examined to determine the extent of this contribution and how seriously it is being diminished or endangered by attrition.

7. The role of the small college is serving the needs of the growing non-traditional student market should be studied by appropriate associations, individual colleges, and government. It has been suggested that this market has not been properly exploited by the small college; yet, there are cases where small colleges have very successfully entered this market. It is certain that this market requires very sophisticated analysis of incremental costs, pricing and marketing. State and federal governments should begin to develop public policy for this non-traditional market. Consumers of non-traditional education in both the public and private sector now encounter quite variable pricing, and, in some senses, it is discriminatory.

8. The possible effects of various public policies and governmental regulation on the nature of the small college should be evaluated. One of the assets of the small college as a national resource springs from its private nature and the special value orientations that it can foster. Government regulations already are tending to curtail pluralism.

9. Information developed in this study and in the proposed follow-on studies should be disseminated through a series of seminars designed to stimulate debate on policy questions and to provide input for setting and implementing policy, as well as through publication.

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CHAPTER II

A PERSPECTIVE ON THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE

A PERSPECTIVE ON THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE

Background paper for a project on "The Causes for the Demise of the Small, Private, Liberal Arts College in the United States" conducted at the College of Education, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University under the sponsorship of the U.S. Office of Education

Richard W. Jonsen
Assistant Professor of Higher Education
School of Education
Syracuse University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE II.1

II. DEFINITION OF THE POPULATION II.12

III. PROFILE OF THE SMALL PRIVATE LESS SELECTIVE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES II.16

IV. THE ROLE OF THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE II.29

V. THE DISTINCTIVENESS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES II.44

VI. THE FISCAL CRISIS -- AND SOME COMPLICATING FACTORS II.58

VII. JUSTIFICATION FOR EXISTENCE: THE PRIVATE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE AS A NATIONAL RESOURCE II.71

REFERENCES II.84

SUPPLEMENTARY BIBLIOGRAPHY II.88

I. THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Summary

The colonial liberal arts college stands as both progenitor of, and model for, subsequent varieties of American higher education. From 1636 until the mid-1800's, this "model" was remarkably uniform. Its religious purposes were inseparable from its academic purposes, and its academic process centered upon a curriculum which was prescribed and static.

By the latter half of the 19th century, important intellectual forces succeeded in destroying the hegemony of this model of higher education, and fostering a variety of academic purposes, institutional types, and organizational activities. Most significant of these forces were:

(1) The intellectual ferment which was represented in Europe by the Enlightenment, and which generated specialization, secularization of intellectual activity, and equalization of the branches of knowledge,

(2) The rise of science and empirical research, imported chiefly from Germany, and enthusiastically embodied in a number of American universities,

(3) Increasingly specific notions about the vocational purposes and utility of higher education (exemplified by the Land Grant movement).

Certain characteristics of the early liberal arts colleges endured in their own direct descendants, as well as in most other institutional types. These characteristics included:

(1) Belief in a perennial curriculum
(2) The ideal of geographic access, and numerous local colleges
(3) Concern for the individual student
(4) Smallness as a virtue
(5) The importance of values and value-inquiry

These characteristics did not endure in a uniform way. The enormous diversity even among small liberal arts colleges is related to a different set of pressures, which acted differentially upon these colleges. Those pressures are:

(1) The triumph of the elective system
(2) The establishment of special clientele liberal arts colleges
(3) The rise of vocationalism
(4) Departmentalization
(5) Secularization
(6) Competition from public institutions

The small liberal arts college is a unique American institution, shaped by opportunities and pressures imbedded in the historical experience of this country. It must be remembered that in a nearly complete sense, the small liberal arts college defined higher education in the United States for more than two centuries, from the founding of Harvard (1636), until the Morrill Land Grant Act (1862) and the rise of the American University, just before the close of the nineteenth century.

The model for this institution was the English colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, especially Emmanuel College. This structure--the residential college (though not part of a University cluster)--was chosen instead of that of the continental University, which by the 17th century was moving towards the concept of a non-resident graduate school, emphasizing professional and specialized training. Why was the collegiate model adopted? This model flourished because (1) numbers of Americans were educated in this kind of college, (2) its residential setting was particularly appropriate to the religious motivations of its founders and supporters, as well as to the geography of a continent with a heavily rural population and a rapidly expanding frontier.

The character of these institutions, as it emerged in the United States, was profoundly influenced by religion and intellectual orthodoxy. The early liberal arts colleges were religious institutions, perhaps to a greater extent than they were academic or intellectual ones. Indeed, the distinction was not made. The motivation for the founding and maintenance

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N.B. I am deeply indebted to colleagues for their generosity in reading critically and commenting on the first draft of this paper: to Joan Stark, Norman Kaufman and Bob Davidson at Syracuse; Vance Peterson at University of Toledo; Tom Corcoran at the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education; E.W. Lautenschlager at Roanoke College and Joseph Kane at the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities. A number of other people of the colleges was that of preserving and nourishing religion through an educated clergy, and an educated and devout laity. Before 1850, nearly all college presidents were drawn from the clergy, and, as Brubacher and Rudy (1968) point out, in the early 1700's, about half of the students were preparing for the ministry. (By 1761 this had diminished to 37 percent and, by 1861, to 20 percent--still a powerful influence on the character of the student body.)

The vision was of a single truth, Christian and usually (but not always) sectarian, to which the claims of literature, or an emerging science, were subordinated. Orthodoxy of both thought and behavior was always expected and usually demanded, of both students and faculty. Academically, this vision was expressed in a rigidly prescribed and sequential (four years) pattern based upon traditional antecedents, and consisting primarily of language and literature (later, increasingly, mathematics and natural philosophy or science), which were imparted chiefly through daily recitations. Notions or skeptical inquiry, empirical science, and the importance of practical or vocationally "useful" skill training, were not welcomed, though in these began the branching and fragmentation of American higher education into its later institutional and "idealized" diversity.

The early college was exclusive, because its clientele was limited to an extremely small portion of the "college age" population, and its entrance requirements included knowledge of classical languages. Certainly the colleges did, in fact, produce men whose civic leadership demonstrated the value of higher education. But college was not perceived as a requisite

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were generous with advice and assistance during preparation of this paper, which I hope they will read with awareness of my implicit thanks. Esther Clark did her usual, unusual job of manuscript typing: with patience, efficiency, and incomparable skill.

for such leadership or for professional work (except in the case of the clergy). Thus, the question of "egalitarian" versus "elitist" higher education is somewhat irrelevant. Certainly, early liberal arts colleges possessed some aspects of both characteristics.

Thus, the early liberal arts colleges embraced orthodox and usually sectarian religious purposes; offered a rigidly prescribed curriculum; emphasized the unquestioned learning of a received intellectual tradition; resisted the "practical" and "useful" arts and sciences; and served a limited clientele. All these characteristics set them increasingly at odds with a society becoming industrialized, urbanized and secular, and, as a consequence, eventually set them at odds with their own students. Evidence of this is to be found in the declining enrollments and proportion of the population attending college during the period 1850 to 1880, noted by Veysey (1963).

A fascinating illustration of the increasing gulf between the dominant purposes and practices of the institutions and the attitudes of their students is to be found in the development of the student literary societies (as described by McLachlan in Stone, 1974). These societies, which were active from the late 18th century to the middle of the 19th, provided compensation for the rigidity and narrowness of the traditional curriculum, and evince the increasing irrelevance which students ascribed to that curriculum.

The small liberal arts colleges were losing their monopoly on higher education, and becoming somewhat estranged from the larger society, because that society was undergoing enormous changes in its patterns of demography, work, information, communication and belief. From the standpoint of higher education, the most important of these societal forces were: the rise of science, industrialization, the vocational utility of education, secularization, the increasing egalitarianism of education, and the increasing societal importance placed upon higher education.

The rise of science and the ideal of research was making the university the dominant form of higher education, which it is today. Industrialization and increasing emphasis upon the vocational utility of education combined not only to influence the emerging university, and generate the land grant movement, but also to encourage the development of powerful technical and technological institutions and to cause a broad variety of types of colleges and universities to expand and emphasize the vocational aspects of their programs. Egalitarianism was a powerful motivator, not only of the land grant movement, but also of the proliferation of both university-level public institutions (state colleges and universities) and, later, community colleges. The increasing societal importance of education made possible the funding, by both public and private sources, of this complex and impressive system of higher education. The increasing secularization of society had created tensions in the historically denominational institutions. This led many to become independent of Church relationship, others to diffuse their traditional focus on religious purpose. The broadening and intensification of societal approval of and dependence on higher education led to the transformation of the normal schools into state colleges (and eventually, universities) as well as to the incipient community college movement.

The small liberal arts college then, had been the exclusive form of higher education for nearly two and a half centuries. As the center of gravity in higher education shifted to other structural forms. the characteristics of the liberal arts college endured in its own direct descendants, as well as, to some extent, in the varieties of newer institutions. What were these characteristics?

First, the belief in a perennial curriculum. Though in its "pure" form this may endure in only a small number of academically conservative institutions such as St. Johns College, the idea of a unified and permanently relevant curriculum exists, with some force and in some shape, in many institutions. The currents of discussion about general education, core curriculum, and perhaps, even the contemporary interest in competency based liberal education, attest to the persistence of belief in the validity of a shared and common experience.

Secondly, localism and geographic access. The large numbers of colleges, established by their founders and their early faculty with great sacrifice (though often criticized as, for instance, a "reckless proliferation of colleges" (Stone, 1974, p. 468)), certainly form the initial infrastructure of the impressive geographic network of institutions of higher education in the United States today. Twenty-five percent of the 2,827 institutions of higher education in the United States are "Liberal Arts Colleges" (Carnegie Commission, 1973). Of that 25 percent, 20.3 percent are "small, less selective liberal arts colleges" (Liberal Arts Colleges II). Though these 719 institutions enroll only 8 percent of the students, the pattern of geographic distribution seems unquestionably to have influenced the powerful American policy and practice in favor of maximum geographic access.

Thirdly, concern for the individual student, and emphasis of the developmental aspects of college experience. The merging of the ideas of academic and personal development (an American and English tradition, rather than continental European), is a powerful and pervasive ideal in all American higher education. The achievement falls short of the ideal, as seems amply illustrated by the history of student discontent and rebellion. But this only confirms the widespread acceptance of this rather powerful characteristic of the small liberal arts college.

Fourth, the attractiveness of smallness. There has been inexorable movement towards larger institutions. In 1870, average institutional enrollment was 92 students; in 1900, 243; in 1940, 874, and, by 1971, 2983. Against this trend is the very fact of survival of the small private institutions (in the face of their unbalanced price competition with low tuition public institutions). And large institutions, both public and private, have become increasingly interested in measures they might take (such as cluster colleges) to decrease the atmosphere of bigness.

Fifth, the value-orientation of the denominational institutions. It is true that a religious and sometimes sectarian inspiration was present in the early history of many public institutions. But it is equally true that the divorce of religious identification from public higher education is now rather complete, and also that many originally denominational institutions are no longer church related. In many of the latter, the residue of that originally religious emphasis exists in value inquiry.

Important as these are, they are influences only. The character of American higher education, under the dominant influence of the University model, and the increasing strength of the public sector (which did not, however, become the majority sector in terms of enrollment until after 1950) has become diverse and diffuse, but the strongest trends were away from the values of the traditional small private liberal arts college.

If the system of American higher education is today diverse, the small liberal arts colleges represent that system's most diverse category. One reason for that diversity is the varied response these colleges have made to the societal forces discussed above, as well as to specific pressures, trends and factors within higher education. Some of the factors are:

1. The triumph of the elective system. Eliot of Harvard first espoused his elective system at his inaugural address in 1869. Abetted by the increasing power of science, the growing influence of notions of utility and practicality (fueled by the Land Grant Act of 1862), and the coincident and consequent breaking down of notions of hierarchy of disciplines and truth, the elective system had triumphed by about 1910. Although, as Veysey (1973) demonstrates, the movements of curricular thought have been pendulum-like, and, in fact, the liberal arts colleges were slower than most other institutions to relinquish substantial prescription, nevertheless the concept of election and student choice has been a powerful influence upon the program of the liberal arts college.

2. The establishment of special clientele liberal arts colleges. To the identification of a clientele of a specific denomination, was added the liberal arts college founded for Negroes (founded by several

denominations after the Civil War), and women (with the establishment of Wesleyan Female College of Macon, Georgia, in 1836).

3. The rise of vocationalism. McGrath (1958) noted the tendency for liberal arts colleges, over a period of about seventy-five years (from about 1870) to become more specialized and more vocational in their curriculum.

> The fact is, however, that even these more conventional colleges, since the 1870's, have adopted, slowly at first, and then more rapidly, curricula with explicit vocational objectives. Before this date they exhibited considerable, though by no means absolute, uniformity of purpose. In contrast to the richness of their present offerings, they were established primarily to introduce the student to a rather limited, intensively studied body of subject matter, and, more particularly, to cultiave certain general qualities of mind and character. . . By 1957. . . the professional, the technical, and the conventional liberal arts programs were invariably found on the same college campus and usually intermixed in the requirements for the degree. The statements of purposes of some institutions candidly reveal this change in policy. They declare that the college now offers complete programs leading to immediate gainful employment in specific occupations (pp. 4-7).

If anything, this phenomenon is more pronounced today.

4. Departmentalization. A concomitant of the university structure, departmentalism became pervasive in liberal arts colleges as well. As will be discussed in subsequent sections, this has certainly led to the increase of specialization, as well as to a deterioration and decrease in the integration of the liberal arts as a comprehensive pattern.

5. Secularization. It is generally observed that the most visible and affluent of the liberal arts colleges are independent, though founded with denominational affiliation. This may have been influenced by the secular nature of the most powerful and successful movements in higher

education: the secular public college movement under the impetus of the Morrill Act, and the university movement under the impetus of the ideals of empirical inquiry divorced from belief. Rising concern, after 1900, of the sensitive issue of academic freedom and religious belief may also have had an influence on the secularization of institutions. Brubacher and Rudy (1968) also point to the Carnegie plan to pension retired professors as putting great strain on denominational bonds because professors of denominational colleges were excluded from its largess. A number of denominational colleges tried to convince the fund that they were not really church-related, and a number of others "were pulled loose from their denominational moorings by the magnet of the Carnegie pension system." (p. 361)

6. Competition from public institutions. Undeniably, one of the major factors in shaping the contemporary small liberal arts college is that as public higher education became the dominant form of higher education in the United States (in terms of enrollments, this dominance occurred about 1950), the small private colleges found themselves competing with a range of public institutions. Their best students were also prime candidates for the prestigious state universities. Their "average" students were also attracted to state colleges. Their academically weaker students were also the natural clientele of the burgeoning community colleges. Much of the present activity in the small liberal arts colleges is attributable to this intense competition with lower priced institutions.

II. DEFINITION OF THE POPULATION

The small private, less selective liberal arts colleges discussed in this paper are for practical purposes the private colleges in the Carnegie Commission's "Liberal Arts II" category (Carnegie Commission, 1973). Recognizing the need for a classification system which would facilitate research and analysis, the Carnegie Commission, in the course of its work, developed such a system, which divides institutions of higher education into five categories:

1. Doctoral Granting Institutions
2. Comprehensive Universities and Colleges
3. Liberal Arts Colleges
4. Two Year Colleges and Institutes
5. Professional Schools and Other Specialized Institutions

Each of these categories is further subdivided into public and private institutions. Several of the categories are further divided. The Doctoral Granting Institutions, for instance, are divided into four types, two classes of "research" universities, and two classes of "doctoral granting" institutions. In these sub-classifications, size, resources, complexity, and function are distinguishing factors.

The Liberal Arts category is divided into Liberal Arts Colleges I and II. Category I includes the more selective liberal arts colleges.[1] Size is a relevant factor, too, since institutions with liberal arts programs, at least one occupational program, and enrollments of over 1500 were included in the "Comprehensive Universities and Colleges" category.

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[1] "More selective" means those which scored 5 or above on Astin's selectivity index, or were included among the 200 leading baccalaureate-granting institutions in terms of numbers of their graduates receiving Ph.D.'s at 40 leading doctoral-granting institutions from 1920 to 1966. The score of 5 or above on the selectivity index roughly corresponds to the equivalent mean scores on the SAT of above 1074, or above 24 on the ACT.

"Liberal Arts Colleges II" includes all institutions which did not meet the selection criteria, and were not included in another category as a result of size and complexity.

This paper focuses on colleges in this category: Liberal Arts Colleges II. By definition, these are virtually all small, relatively unselective, and non-complex in structure. The category is almost synonymous with the 494 colleges which, because of their smallness, moderate selectivity, and relative obscurity, Astin has appropriately called "invisible" colleges. The Carnegie classification category includes 547 such colleges.[1] There is extensive overlap between the Carnegie category and Astin's "invisible colleges." Most importantly to a study which is attempting to determine the cause of small college failure, these institutions, small, less selective, relatively obscure, are clearly "at risk" whatever they are called. As Astin points out: "Of all institutions of higher education, invisible colleges are the most likely to become extinct. . . The present study is the first to be done on a group of 494 colleges that few people know about and perhaps even fewer care about." (Astin, 1972, p. 11)

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[1] Astin dropped one category lower to the cut-off level in terms of selectivity for his operational definition of "invisible" colleges (to below level 4, which means a maximum mean score on the SAT for his institutions of 997). He also excluded, irrespective of complexity, institutions with over 2,500 enrollment. He includes, however, a number of institutions which, because of program complexity, Carnegie included in other categories than Liberal Arts Colleges II.

It is impossible to emphasize too strongly that there is not a one-for-one comparability with Astin's college and the Carnegie classification, which has formed the basic list of colleges examined in this paper. Carnegie's category includes many colleges which are more selective in their admissions than Astin's population. But its list seems to be a reliable, if not perfect, population of small liberal arts colleges. Nevertheless, much of the data used referred to in the paper is based upon the "invisible colleges" of Astin's study. It must be interpreted with the foregoing in mind.

Another attempt at categorization is that of the Academy for Educational

The use of this category to "define" the small liberal arts colleges does involve several problems:

(1) It is a definition largely by exclusion. It tends to exclude larger institutions (over 1500). It excludes selective institutions. It excludes complex institutions.

(2) Therefore the positive characteristics of the population remain undefined. Use of the Carnegie list begs the question with respect to the nature of the small liberal arts college. In large part, that reflects the diversity within the small liberal arts college population which was discussed in the first section. Furthermore, one purpose of this paper is to attempt to understand this nature of those colleges.

(3) The Carnegie classification probably includes some colleges which are inappropriately labeled as small liberal arts colleges (a few larger institutions which are apparently included because of their lack of complexity). It also may exclude some which it should have included (and placed inappropriately in other categories). The Carnegie technical paper itself makes note of some of these arbitrary assignments.

(4) The Carnegie list does include a large number of denominational institutions, because these tend to be small and less selective.

(5) The most elusive aspect of defining in this manner is the failure to reveal the reality of purpose, performance or outcome. We may have a sense of what "a strong liberal arts tradition" is; these colleges are supposed to possess it. But that may raise more questions about the reality of that tradition--its meaning in terms of student outcomes, in terms of resource allocation, in terms of operational goals--than it answers.

Development (Irwin, 1973). But this "taxonomy" rejects the factor of selectivity, and depends largely upon the factors of size and complexity to determine the institutions in its category "General Baccalaureate Colleges." I think it less useful, for purposes of this paper, than the Carnegie list.

But in defense of this approach, the concern of this paper is the status and future of small liberal arts colleges. We know that many--not all, certainly--of these institutions are "at risk" with respect to survival. A definition which captures a number of elements of that vulnerability--size, moderate selectivity, denominationalism, historical emphasis upon liberal arts subjects--such a definition will assist us in understanding those institutions more clearly.

III. PROFILE OF THE SMALL PRIVATE LESS SELECTIVE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE

Summary

Because of the factors outlined in the initial section, the small liberal arts colleges form an extremely diverse group. With the exception that they are defined (by using Carnegie Commission's Liberal Arts College II category) in terms of size, selectivity and complexity, these colleges are diverse with respect to size, fiscal stability, characteristics of students, faculty, administrative control and environment (and, within a range, with respect to size and selectivity). They range in size from a hundred or so to several thousand students. Their students vary in academic ability from very weak to quite able. In some, the faculty possess objectively high qualifications, in terms of percent of doctorates and kinds of institutions where they were awarded. Administratively, environments range from permissive to quite strict. Most of these colleges are rural; some are urban. Some are ethnically defined.

Thus, while there is no "typical" small liberal arts college, there are, in fact, some patterns which emerge from the following discussion, and which support the following observations about the small private, less selective liberal arts colleges.

1. Size is the most typical characteristic. These small colleges universally enjoy the benefits of smallness, which are cohesiveness, community, friendliness and warmth.

2. In spite of this, they tend to suffer from somewhat higher dropout rates than private colleges as a whole.

3. They are typically rural and attract disproportionate numbers of rural students (though the Catholic colleges' locations and clientele are just the reverse--overrepresentation of urban students). This distinction typically breaks along Catholic-Protestant lines.

4. Because they are less selective, the cohesiveness and warmth gained because of smallness is traded off for climates weak in intellectual and academic aspiration.

5. Because of competitive disadvantage, faculties appear to possess less powerful academic preparation than other kinds of institutions, but the selection process seems to value the traditional kinds of preparation, even if it involves less than doctoral level accomplishment at a regional university.

6. In spite of the liberal arts history and commitments of these institutions, the vocational factor has typically existed alongside liberal education, and, as enrollment problems become acute, appears to be increasingly pursued.

7. The pursuit of increasing career relevance does not seem to have, in most institutions, stimulated interest in college-wide rethinking of the liberal arts, and of their relationship to this career emphasis. There are notable and exciting exceptions to this general observation.

8. Their fiscal position is inherently weak--tuition charges are lower than in "elite" liberal arts colleges, endowments are small, their church relationship is not accompanied by extensive church support. These "input" fiscal realities are accompanied by tendencies to internal inefficiency in many of these colleges: departmentalism has created a tendency to course

proliferation and the offering of degrees in majors with extremely small demand (one or two graduates per year). This observation is supported by material in Section VII.

The Students[1]

Students attending the small liberal arts colleges tend to be local. Though the colleges themselves are mostly residential in character, a high percentage of students come from homes within 50 miles of the college, and a majority from within the state or region. In the small liberal arts colleges, a large percentage are from rural or farm backgrounds (an average of 11 percent, according to Astin's figures for the "invisible colleges," but ranging as high as 55 percent). The Catholic and Protestant colleges are quite different in this respect. ACE data (National Norms) indicate that Catholic college freshmen include a disproportionally high concentration of students raised in large cities and their suburbs, whereas Protestant colleges include similarly high concentrations of students who were raised on farms or in small towns.

As is characteristic of private colleges, the families are more affluent than average, but less so than certain other kinds of colleges.

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[1] In this and the following section, I have drawn heavily upon several sources which include profiles of small liberal arts colleges. They are Astin's The Invisible College (1972), Astin's The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 1972 and 1973 (1973 and 1974), Astin's Who Goes Where to College (1965), Astin's The College Environment (1968), Pace's Education and Evangelism (1972), and Stern's People in Context (1970).

Other institutional data have been gotten from college sources (catalogs) or standard handbooks such as Watts. The College Handbook, 1975, or Cass and Birnbaum, 1973, or Barron's Profiles of American Colleges. 1972.

I must emphasize that the populations of colleges in these works are not identical. I have tried to draw inferences from their data where these seemed legitimately applicable to small liberal arts colleges. I have also attempted to properly qualify these inferences. I again emphasize that there is no

For all colleges, 44.2 percent of freshmen come from homes with parental income of more than $15,000 annually. For four year Protestant colleges the figure is 44.8 percent, and for four year Catholic colleges, 48.3 percent. But the equivalent figure for four year nonsectarian colleges is 52.3 percent, and private universities, 65.7 percent. As Astin points out in discussing the "invisible colleges," they enroll a much larger proportion of students from poor families than do "elite" colleges (5.4 percent).

With respect to academic achievement, the invisible colleges and the "elite"[1] colleges form two separate distributions. The elite colleges enroll high concentration of students who had achieved "A" averages in secondary schools, whereas the invisible colleges enroll low proportions of such students (among the invisible colleges studied by Astin, the highest enrollment of "A" students was 31 percent). Modest achievement is accompanied by modest aspirations, and a good many fewer of the invisible college students aspire to the doctorate than do the students from elite colleges.

Astin notes that the career choices of the invisible college students are much more pragmatic and vocationally oriented, and that they are less likely to aspire to high level professional positions than the students from the elite colleges. This is reflected in the heavy concentration of degrees awarded by the small liberal arts colleges in business and

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"typical" small liberal arts college, and that the characteristics associated with such colleges generally do not apply to all.

[1] I use "elite" here in Astin's sense: those liberal arts colleges with highly selective admissions, and usually enjoying strong endowments and high tuition. They are relatively small. Of Astin's 44 colleges, only 6 enroll more than 2500 students, and 26 enroll between 1,000 and 2,500 students.

education and health-related (non-M.D.) fields--majors with immediate vocational payoff (as opposed to majors in the humanities or pre-professional majors leading to further study). In many of the small private liberal arts colleges, over half the Bachelor's degrees are awarded in education and business. In short, the invisible colleges deal with a very different clientele than do the elite college. Their students seem both more pragmatic and less ambitious in their career plans.

In terms of family finances, the invisible college students somewhat resemble those in public community colleges, whereas in terms of academic achievement and aspirations, as well as career choice, they tend to resemble students in public four year colleges. This substantiates the contention that the small liberal arts college is in direct competition for students with public four year colleges and community colleges.

Location

The small liberal arts colleges tend to be rural; Astin points out that less than 20 percent of the invisible colleges are located in or near a major city (though the Catholic colleges are concentrated in urban and suburban settings). Although represented in nearly all states, small liberal arts colleges tend to be overrepresented in the Midwest and Southeast, and underrepresented in the Northeast, and West-Southwest.

The Faculty

Astin indicates that at only 2 percent of the invisible colleges at least half of the faculty members have the Ph.D. or its equivalent. This factor varies. In many of the small liberal arts colleges, faculty recruitment appears to have been vigorous, though traditional, with a good many of the professional staff coming from institutions of high quality. The tendency to follow a single pattern is often apparent, however. In perhaps the majority of these colleges, doctoral degrees, where possessed, are typically from second rank or regional universities. Often, the catalog lists "further graduate study" or "candidacy" in lieu of a doctorate. In the Catholic colleges the awarding institutions are frequently Catholic universities.

My impression is that adherence to the traditional model has also meant that little imagination has been employed in recruiting faculty from outside professional academic ranks. Where this is done, such appointments are categorized as adjunct or part time, and separated in the catalog listings from the regular faculty appointments. Small liberal arts colleges seem no more likely to "risk" the appointment of persons without doctoral study, without graduate study, or, indeed, without college degrees than do higher status institutions, even though as Meeth (1975) points out the assumptions governing this pattern are questionable.

Certainly the competitive position of these colleges is complicated by low salaries. Many of the small private colleges are at or below the 20th percentile of faculty pay in their respective ranks, falling below the top level of professorial pay by as much as $8000 (Chronicle of Higher Education, June 9, 1975). Under such conditions, the difficulties of recruiting a professionally competent staff are enormous. It is evident that, in spite of this difficulty, some of the small liberal arts colleges, for reasons of atmosphere, religious or other attraction, recruit and retain remarkably talented and dedicated faculty. (For an interesting sidelight on this, see the letter of Norbert Hruby, President of Aquinas College, in the Chronicle of Higher Education, October 28, 1975.)

The Environment

A number of studies published within the past five years or so have used socio-psychological techniques to investigate college environments, and the social and psychological characteristics of their students (Stern, 1970; Astin, 1968, 1972, 1975; Pace, 1972).

These studies must be interpreted cautiously and conservatively. They frequently represent information which was gathered as early as the mid-sixties, in an environmental situation which was and still is rapidly changing. Nevertheless, they produce a good deal of enlightening information about the small liberal arts colleges, and the quality and character of their academic life. The following observations are supported by data in the references cited, as well as by other and similar research efforts:

(1) The small less selective liberal arts colleges possess an atmosphere of cohesiveness and friendliness with close and informal contact among students, and between students and faculty. "Concern for the individual student" and identification with the college are social realities, not just catalog rhetoric. Pace observes that this is especially true of the strongly denominational colleges. "The more firmly and zealously a college is related

to a church, the more clearly it emerges as a distinctive environment. And this distinctiveness is defined by uniformly high scores on the characteristics labeled community, propriety and practicality." (1972, p. 37)

(2) There are costs associated with these qualities. Cohesiveness seems negatively related to selectivity, and intellectual climate. ". . .(T)he implication is that there are other things considered more important at these (denominational) schools than academic success. The low intellectual factor scores indicate what these are: . . . organized group activities and a well-ordered academic community." (Stern, 1970, p. 78) Thus community may be achieved by devaluing academic competition. Also, the strong vocational climate of the small colleges may work against a highly intellectual atmosphere.

(3) In contrast, "the independent ('elite') liberal arts colleges tend to be characterized by a pronounced intellectual climate and an absence or deemphasis of many non-intellectual factors found in other schools." (Stern, 1970, p. 77) Students have higher achievement orientations, are most competitive and independent, academically able and aggressive. They also display greater musical and artistic ability. They manifest weaker religious ties, and less decorous social behavior. The colleges appear less cohesive and friendly, substantiating the correlations observed in the case of the small liberal arts colleges.

(4) The warmth and cohesiveness of the small liberal arts colleges does not carry over entirely into classroom relationships, where the "elite" colleges score much higher on "familiarity with the instructor" than the "invisible" colleges (who themselves are still high on this factor). This suggests that there is a good deal more social distance between student and

faculty than among students, in spite of the friendliness of the atmosphere. There also appears to be less "structure" in the classroom of the elite colleges than in those of the invisible colleges.

(5) Size has favorable implications with respect to outcomes of the college experience, whereas selectivity does not. "The cognitive skills of a student seem to develop at the same rate whatever the selectivity of the institution he attended." (Astin, 1977, p. 83)

(6) Students in invisible colleges tend to be dissatisfied. It is noteworthy that the highly selective private liberal arts colleges tend to have dropout rates at the end of the freshman year of 10 percent or less. In the small private liberal arts colleges, the typical rates are 20 to 30 percent, with some higher than that. In many cases, less than 50 percent persist to receive degrees. Whatever the complexity of this phenomenon, it does not seem an altogether favorable sign that the level of freshman dissatisfaction should typically be that high. Further, Astin (1975) has demonstrated that the very small colleges (below 500 enrollment) appear related to disproportionately higher rates of dropping-out.

Program

It is impossible to satisfactorily profile the programs of the small liberal arts college; they are too diverse with respect to structure, emphases, and curricular change. Nevertheless, I will venture some observations based upon impressions of catalog descriptions, statistics regarding degrees, and program descriptions in handbooks and manuals. These observations are as follows:

(1) The traditional highly structured and prescribed liberal arts curriculum is for all practical purposes dead in these colleges.

(2) In its place are found, typically, sets of distribution requirements, which specify courses to be taken from area groupings in humanities, social sciences, and so on, in addition to a traditional departmental major.

(3) Those majors, and the departmental structure which they imply, appear to imitate the structural response to the specialization of knowledge developed in large university settings, but perhaps unnecessary and even wrong in a small college environment. Why inappropriate? First, departmentalization has apparently led to the creation of majors and degree programs regardless of student demand. In most of these colleges, there are at least a half-dozen disciplines which award one or two degrees per year. Even where the department is justified primarily by its service offerings, the existence of a major probably implies the maintenance of undersubscribed upper division courses. Secondly, departmentalization also creates pressures for the enlargement and elaboration of course offerings (aside from those needed for degree programs) to accommodate faculty specializations and interests. Thirdly, and related to these two problems, the strength of specialization inhibits cross disciplinary and interdisciplinary activity, thus working against an integrated approach to liberal or general education. For example, very few "interdisciplinary" degrees show up in the listing of degrees conferred by these institutions. Nevertheless, the existence of departmental structure is typical among the small liberal arts colleges.

(4) The curriculum emphasis in the small liberal arts college is not exclusively liberal arts. In fact, as had already been discussed, a high percentage of these colleges award the largest number of their degrees in education, with a strong representation in business and health related fields--suggesting a vocationalism which is somewhat at odds with their popular image.

(5) There is conflicting evidence regarding significant rethinking in these colleges. They are underrepresented in nationally visible indicators of such rethinking--participation in projects such as Change in Liberal Education or Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grants for institutional renewal. They are underrepresented in somewhat non-comprehensive listings of "innovation" such as The Guide to Alternative Colleges and Universities (Blaze and others, 1974). On ther other hand, perusual of a more systematic listing of such innovations, The Yellow Pages of Undergraduate Innovations (The Cornell Center for Improvement in Undergraduate Education, 1974), reveals a large and healthy representation of small liberal arts colleges in most of the kinds of innovation listed: independent study and student designed courses and majors, new modes of evaluation and new calendars. Small liberal arts colleges seem to be underrepresented in hardware oriented (TV, computers) innovations, and also in inter-institutional arrangements. They are well represented in the development of career oriented courses and programs, which indicate either the creation of new vocational programs (such as for "legal specialists") or the adaptation of existing programs to vocational purposes (health services analysis for majors in sociology). There are also programs designed to promote existing major offerings to specific work groups (behavioral science training seminars for correction officers) as well as renovation of traditional vocational programs (competency based nursing

and teaching programs). And the competency based movement at the undergraduate level is an attempt to make specific and explicit the relationships between liberal arts studies and life competence, which catalogs have always claimed. Finally, colleges are developing entrepreneureal outreach to specific career groups under the inducement of federal or state grants (for law enforcement programs, for instance).

These career oriented initiatives and innovations are further illustration of the point discussed perviously, that a notable activity of the small liberal arts colleges, not wholly inconsistent with their own history, is the aggressive pursuit, in many of such colleges, of a more specific vocational identification.

(6) It is impossible to estimate how widespread or vital these indications of institutional renewal are. For one thing, even if small liberal arts colleges are fairly well represented compared to other kinds of colleges, it does appear that no group of colleges is remarkably or uniformly vigorous in adapting programs to new clientele, interests, or technology. It hardly appears that the small liberal arts colleges are moving as a group to become more responsive, modern, career-relevant, or imaginative in their curricular structure or means of delivery or relationship to clientele (of course, the ability of small colleges to mount sophisticated programs of grant development is limited, which partially explain their underrepresentation). For another thing, the appearance of such innovative activities may belie reality. One college catalog states that "A part of the student's self-education is the designing of his own program. Each student is recognized as having individual aptitudes and needs, and the details of his program of study are arranged by him from semester to semester with the assistance of competent counselors." But the catalog goes on to describe 50 hours (for a

total for graduation of 128) of distribution requirements, in 11 areas, 26 hours of which are specified with respect to course (or two course alternatives). Further, the program of concentration which requires another 42 hours of study in an area of concentration turns out to embrace rather traditional majors consuming typically 36 of those 42 hours. The rhetoric of program independence seems a good deal undermined by the reality of the requirements.

(7) It may be unimportant whether these "innovations" are internally motivated, by hard headed thinking about the mission of the institution, or externally motivated, by the even harder realities of cash and clientele. While one is tempted to believe the former is true, it probably isn't. And the reality of the latter is that small colleges have fewer resources with which to make adjustments, compared to larger, more affluent, or more financially stable institutions. Thus, as conditions worsen, the relative ability of small institutions to compete for students, dollars, public attention, and so forth will certainly decline. One final irony is that, as the small colleges intensify their career-relatedness, and broaden the scope of their clientele, they place themselves more and more directly in competition with institutions such as community colleges, which specialize in such programs, and serve such clientele. And, as the confidence in "returns" to college education declines, students will be less and less willing to pay the difference to attend the "private" imitator of the less expensive public institution.

IV. THE ROLE OF THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE

Summary

The preceding sections have attempted to describe the small liberal arts college from an historical and sociological standpoint. What are they like and how did they come to be that way?

In this section, that information will be used to attempt to clarify the role played by small liberal arts colleges in relation to the system of American higher education.

I have chosen to discuss that role in terms illuminated by Laurence Veysey. In his brilliant history of the American University (1965), he defines four major claims which he describes as competing for control of the emerging university: discipline and piety (the legacy of the colonial college), utility (the focus of the Morrill Land Grant Act, and the natural interest of an industrializing nation), research (the "pure" focus of the model imported from Germany) and liberal culture (a new reading, in a sense, of the traditional mission of the college). This section will discuss the ways in which the liberal arts tradition influenced the incorporation of these "ideals" in the increasingly diverse types of American colleges and universities, and also the way in which the liberal arts college was, itself, redefined and variously transformed by these ideals.

This section will attempt to delineate the role of the small liberal arts college in those terms, with some added considerations of purpose drawn from a report of the Carnegie Commission (1973).

(1) Vocationalism (which Veysey includes under the heading utility)

and research are ideals pursued more vigorously and systematically in other kinds of institutions than liberal arts colleges. While these other institutions have been influenced historically by the example of the liberal arts college, the latter have also been influenced, to some extent negatively, by vocationalism and research.

(2) The ideals of discipline and piety, the traditional province of the liberal arts college, are still, in altered form, part of its role.

(3) Liberal culture, best represented by the general education movement, has failed to secure a unified, clear and powerful voice in higher education today, either in the small liberal arts college or elsewhere. Some small liberal arts colleges are successfully defining or redefining this notion. Most are not. Unfortunately, such efforts appear unrelated to chances for survival.

(4) The small liberal arts colleges contribute in a unique way to the personal growth and development of their students.

(5) They are also an instrument, though not the primary one, of course, of the expansion of educational opportunity.

(6) It should be made clear (especially in relation to data presented in the preceding section) that while they are frequently categorized together, the small liberal arts colleges and the elite liberal arts colleges are vastly different kinds of institutions. While imitative of many of the status features of what Jencks and Reisman call the "university college," the small liberal arts colleges to a great extent exhibit the opposite of many of the characteristics of those institutions.

(7) The small liberal arts colleges to some extent are joint proprietors (with many other institutions) of the ideals of liberal education,

a role unfortunately unlikely to pay off in public policy at any level.

Vocationalism and Research

Vocationalism and research have had profound impacts upon the role of the liberal arts college, but in quite different ways. I would like to briefly explore these themes.

The extent to which higher education has always been "vocational" is often overlooked. Medieval institutions were, to a great extent, vocational, in the sense that they prepared students for the learned professions. We have seen that the colonial colleges trained students for the ministry. The largest number of those students came from ministerial families. (Of 300 fathers of Harvard College students between 1677-1703, 79 were ministers (Brubacker and Rudy, 1968, p 40).) The curriculum which we may regard as an early and traditional kind of general education curriculum, was attuned to the needs of an educated ministry.

Many small private liberal arts colleges can be seen today as having a heavy emphasis upon "vocational" subjects--business, education, nursing and health-related professions, as well as undergraduate preparation for graduate professions such as law and medicine. But this represents no real break with their tradition. It is true that this tendency has increased, and the drive of the liberal arts colleges to intensify, broaden and expand this vocational commitment in order to attract or maintain students has been widely noted. There is not only the trend towards more vocational subjects in the liberal arts colleges, and the concentration of increasing numbers of students in them, but also a renascence of interest in cooperative work/study programs such as pioneered by Antioch. There has also been experimentation with new relationships between business corporations and colleges, such as that of Lambuth College, Tennessee (Change, June, 1975, and September, 1975).

This vocationalism, or "utility" as Veysey calls it (to describe a much broader and more elevated concept than just vocationalism), certainly affected the way in which liberal arts colleges have sought to transmit knowledge, and to provide opportunities for student development.

So, too, has the powerful and, to some extent, dominating idea of research as it has affected the liberal arts college. Research, especially empirical scientific research, was the inspiration of the American University, as its form and substance became clear shortly after the beginning of the twentieth century. The ideal of empirical research, copied from the attractive model of the German University (but not without some distortion, as Veysey points out), led quickly and powerfully to specialization and departmentalization. Along with specialization went a climate of abstract investigation, "the liberation of intellect for its own sake." Because of the powerful attraction of the ideal of scientific research, these two correlates of that ideal spread through American higher education. Specialization became almost universal, and independent and detached investigation one of higher education's most cherished values. The effect on the undergraduate college was not wholly positive, since the values of undergraduate teaching were often competing (unfairly in terms of professional interest and the reward structure) with the values of research for scarce time, effort and resources (Veysey, 1965, pp. 143-144).

With specialization came departmentalization, which rapidly became the norm for academic structure, not only in the university, where it was perhaps inevitable, but also in the college, where it was neither inevitable nor, perhaps appropriate. Dressel and others have criticized the departmental structure for its inherent pathology. "Despite the predilection of faculty for the departmental structure, rising out of their experiences in specialized study in the graduate school, and despite, too, the apparently greater relevance of the disciplinary-based department for curriculum development, the size of the faculty in a small college is not sufficient to support a departmental structure. Larger liberal arts colleges may use it, although the departmental-disciplinary organization is better adapted to faculty aspirations for more courses and more majors than for an integrated liberal undergraduate education." (Dressel, Johnson and Marcus, 1970, p. 6) The tendency of the small liberal arts college to adopt this structure is something I discussed in the previous section. Besides the problem of course and major proliferation which it entails, the departmental structure also reinforces the temptation of small institutions to adopt the typical reward system of the university for its own faculty, and to prize the research and scholarship appropriate in the university setting, to the detriment of the much more appropriate activities of teaching, advising, and course and program development.

Frequently, we think of goals of institutions as outward looking--to serve clients, produce research, respond to community needs and interests. But institutions also have goals of maintenance, and "internal service." Departmentalization is the effect of one such goal, the structuring of institutions of higher education in such a way as to best serve the needs and interests of the faculty and the ethos to which they respond most fully--that of research and independent investigation. It should not seem unusual that this is so; it is an inherent tendency of any bureaucratic institution, and the university is such an institution. But it should at the same time acknowledge that the result is not necessarily of positive value to the other goals simultaneously pursued.

Thus, while the purpose of research is tangential to the role of the small liberal arts colleges, these institutions have been profoundly influenced by its pervasive influence in higher education.

Discipline and Piety

The third major ideal in competition for power in American higher education Veysey calls "discipline and piety." This is the traditional legacy of the American college, and one of which the small liberal arts college is the direct, and perhaps sole, heir. While not all small private liberal arts colleges are denominational, it is striking that most are. Among those, as Patillo and Mackenzie (1966) have demonstrated, is a great variety both in the strength of denominational affiliation, and the way in which that affiliation is manifested. But, in fact, about 90 percent of small liberal arts colleges have denominational identification. Even in some no longer affiliated, the college frequently articulates a concern for values, commitments, and ethical quest, which seems unquestionably religious in motivation. A statement of Landrum Bolling, President of Earlham College, illustrates this merging of religious emphasis with concern for character and values:

> Practically all of our private colleges and universities were founded by or are related to religious bodies. Part of our early and long-time mission was to help train up the young in the doctrines of a particular church or at least to provide "good wholesome Christian influences" upon the young. It is exceedingly difficult these days to indoctrinate the young in any set of inherited dogmas or traditional moral codes. Hence, increasingly the church related colleges become embarrassed or indifferent to their church sponsorships and related traditions. Such charges are inescapable. What is also inescapable, however, is a continuing and unfilled responsibility to speak to the need, often the desperate hunger of young people to find authentic values, true meaning, valid purposes, and fruitful r[illegible]nships in their lives. Law and order crackdowns on the y[illegible] will not do very much to satisfy their needs or these hungers. And certainly the young will not be helped, in their moral, ethical, and spiritual search by a cop-out permissiveness on the part of the older generation. The mission of private and church-related colleges of the land will have to be restated in fresh terms for the age (Bolling, 1970).

This statement expresses both the religious tradition of a larger segment (majority) of our small liberal arts colleges, as well as the fact that the residual heritage of this religion is in some an expressed emphasis on human development in a moral and ethical sense. These colleges can be arrayed on a spectrum from those where the religious affiliation is still strong and expressed, both in the curriculum and in the enforcements of codes of behavior, to those where the heritage has virtually disappeared.

One of the characteristics which distinguishes between the small private liberal arts colleges and those of national visibility and relative affluence is the extent to which the latter have become independent of religious affiliation, and the extent to which the former have preserved it.

Liberal Culture

The fourth of Veysey's competing ideals is that of liberal culture. In the age of University ascendancy, the emphasis of scientific disciplines, useful vocational study, and elective choice combined to destroy what had been perceived as a highly integrated and hierarchical liberal arts curriculum. No matter that this curriculum was also rigid and not subjected to critical scrutiny, the partial and intermittent success of the "general education" movement to discover a contemporary replacement testifies to the monopoly that curriculum had on the collegiate goal of transmission of knowledge. Of course, other factors contributed to the inability of the classical curriculum to persist--some of which we have discussed: departmentalization, specialization and the power of science, as well as its evident intransigence towards the incorporation of new currents of thought (such as those embodied in the Enlightenment).

The general education movement is one offspring of the ideal of liberal culture. That movement, at least the part of it which may be represented by the Harvard Report on General Education in a Free Society (1945) and Bell's The Reforming of General Education (1968) is usually embodied in an attempt to restructure the curriculum, through survey courses, distribution requirements, and, more recently, problem oriented courses, in order to recapture the spirit of what is believed to have been an integrated approach to liberal education. More recently, however, that movement has fragmented. Further, today's attempts to recapture that spirit have also included a shift in focus away from the structure of the curriculum. The competency based movement attempts to partially externalize the validation of the curriculum, much as external examinations have traditionally done. In non-campus bound "external degree" programs the focus is upon individualization through intensive and personalized advising and "contractual" program design. Many colleges are adopting work or foreign study programs as an "integrative" device. Increasingly, the non-cognitive or para-cognitive development of students is accommodated through the arts or through programs which focus upon personal growth. Problem centered seminars and year-long courses undertake to encourage and stimulate interdisciplinary activity both on the part of the student and the faculty.

It is not clear that small private liberal arts colleges as a group have exhibited leadership in the development of such innovative approaches to the traditional liberal arts emphasis. In fact, there is some evidence that they haven't. Few small liberal arts colleges are found participating in nationally prominent projects designed to stimulate such development. Of 32 "finalists" in the competition for participationg in the project "Change in Liberal Education," only 3 were small private liberal arts colleges. (One other college participates as a resource institution.) Of 176 institutions and agencies receiving "FIPSE" grants for 1975, many of which were for comprehensive institutional renewal, five were small liberal arts colleges. Twenty-four of 547 small liberal arts colleges are listed in the Guide to Alternative Colleges and Universities (Blaze and others, 1974).[1] Admittedly, these are impressions but, I think, valid ones. Thus, while there is evidence that the curricula of small liberal arts colleges is moving in a freer and more flexible direction, there is no such evidence of widespread and comprehensive rethinking of that curriculum.

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[1] Joan Stark has pointed to the large (perhaps majority) representation of small colleges in the Association for Innovation in Higher Education (originally formed to promote the "4-1-4" calendar). This does not change my own opinion on this, but I acknowledge it as "evidence to the contrary."

Other Aspects of the Role of the Small Liberal Arts College

I have talked mainly about those aspects of small liberal arts programs which relate to what the Carnegie Commission calls "intellectual, aesthetic, ethical and skill development" (1963), but the college also serves as an environment for "more general developmental growth." Their size and frequently their setting make these colleges remarkable settings for the development of community. Research evidence verifies that an atmosphere of friendliness and informal interrelationships exists among students, and frequently between students and faculty, at such institutions. The advantages of smallness coincide with the conventional wisdom on this point. Chickering (1969, p. 190) has pointed out that studies suggest that small institutional size is related to individual participation, involvement and satisfaction; and that along with increased opportunities for these may come increased competence, the development of confidence, the development of integrity. Some of the research evidence in this regard will be presented in the next section.

One aspect of personal development is socialization. It seems clear that differential patterns of socialization are related to different kinds of educational institutions in the United States. Certainly the values and attitudes which the majority of students are socialized into (or reinforced in) at large research universities, technical institutes, and other relatively distinctive institutions are probably quite different one from another. Similarly, the socialization effects of small liberal arts colleges should be associated with their modal characteristics: denominational affiliation, rural location, and local drawing power. There is also the perhaps less tangible socialization effect of relative unselectiveness, and, in many cases, comparatively poorly paid faculties.

While the small liberal arts college is not the central institution in serving the purpose of the "enlargement of educational justice for the post-secondary age group" (another of the purposes listed by Carnegie), it is certainly a contributor in this regard. Low selectivity, often perceived negatively, contributes to the egalitariamism of the system, and also insures opportunity for those students whose social and economic characteristics are related to poor performance on many standard indicators of academic achievement and promise. In the Catholic liberal arts colleges, the median family income appears to be slightly above $12,500; in the Protestant liberal arts colleges, just below $15,000. But in the nonsectarian liberal arts colleges, it is above $15,000, and in the private universities, close to $20,000. Viewed another way, while about 60 percent of the students in Catholic and Protestant four year colleges come from families whose annual income is less than $15,000, this is true of only 48 percent of students from private nonsectarian four year colleges and 41 percent of those from private universities.

Thus, while the small, private liberal arts colleges do not contribute to educational opportunities with the same force as public institutions, they make a significantly greater contribution than other private institutions.

In many respects, the small, private liberal arts college is a "terminal" college (with apologies for the use of such an infelicitous word when applied to education). That is, it is somewhat the negative image of what Jencks and Reisman (1969) have called the university college:

> . . . a college whose primary purpose is to prepare students for graduate work of some kind--primarily in the arts and sciences, but also in professional subjects ranging from law and medicine to business and social work. . . Such a university college usually draws most of its students from the top tenth of the national distribution. It seldom loses more than a fifth of them during the undergraduate years. . . It usually sends nearly three-quarters of its men and a third to a half of its women to graduate school. If such a university college is administratively part of a larger institution, it is likely to share its faculty with the graduate school of arts and sciences. But even if it is separate, it is almost certain to draw its faculty from the same manpower pool as the graduate schools of arts and sciences, seeking the same virtues and looking askance at the same presumed vices. The university college is the fruition of the academic revolution at the undergraduate level. . . Out of more than 2,000 undergraduate colleges, probably no more than 100 today really fit the above description (p. 24).
>
> They provide a model which most of the other 1,900 colleges regard as desirable, even if not immediately accessible. Drawn by emulation on the one side and pushed by accrediting agencies on the other, an increasing number of terminal colleges hire Ph.D.'s from the leading graduate schools even though they fear the impact of men who may not be happy or complacent at a terminal college, and who may also make others less happy or complacent. . . Virtually all terminal colleges want to hire faculty of the kind now hired by the University colleges. Whether or not these faculty come out of the subculture to which a college has traditionally been tied is secondary. In most cases the terminal colleges also want to recruit students entirely on the basis of their academic ability. They would prefer to ignore traditional considerations like geography, religion, ethnicity, and class (p. 25).
>
> The university colleges and their emulators usually try. . . to help their students transcend whatever subculture they are born and raised in, and move them out into a slightly more cosmopolitan world (p. 28).

In a sense, the mission is the reverse of the mission of the small liberal arts college, even though the latter subscribes to many of the university college's attitudes and processes. Along many lines, at least along lines of religion, ethnicity, intellectuality, and geography, the small liberal arts college often serves to secure the student in the culture of his or her birth and rearing. Whether or not this is seen as "good" is not relevant here. It has enriched the diversity of American higher education, and widened greatly the scope of the individual student's available choice.

Conclusion

What, then, is the role of the small liberal arts college? Its historic role is both clear and unified. It served to transmit the values of an orthodox belief, as well as an intellectual tradition perceived as relatively fixed.

But today's liberal arts colleges do not play a single role or present a simple image. There are many types of liberal arts colleges, arrayed along several dimensions: the dimension of religious affiliation, the dimension of selectivity, the dimension of size, the dimension of curriculum coherence and integrity, and the dimension of "culture-utility."

The enduring and perhaps basic role of the liberal arts college today (though not shared by all of these colleges) may simply be an attitude, "a strong liberal arts tradition." This tradition and attitude may be independent of any of the above characteristics and factors. Such an attitude is elusive, and only faintly conveyed by the generality of catalog statements. The attitude is the belief that there is indeed a perennial task for higher education that simply cannot be encompassed in training for work, no matter how broadly defined a notion of vocation. It is the belief that there are skills of humanity and citizenship, competencies of moral vision and ethical action; and that certain "studies" tend to assist people to develop these better than others. These skills and competencies may be developed outside a college or university, they may be developed in the community which inheres in such a college or university, as well as in its formal "curriculum" But the belief holds that there are indeed some intellectual experiences, that is, experiences specific to that of a college setting, which build such characteristics in a unique and powerful way.

We know, generally, what "liberal arts" subjects are. We know that the humanities, the natural, physical and social sciences constitute the liberal arts, without arguing about the fact that they may be taught in a "vocational" way, just as other subjects may be taught in a "liberal" way. We know that in some way the liberal arts reflect a tradition of concern for the humane; for a reflectiveness about man, about his world, and about the preservation of intellectual and artistic tradition; a caring for both dispassionate observation and analysis, and, at the same time, the heightening of emotional and interpersonal response. We know that liberal arts "subjects" may be taught without real attention to these concerns, just as we know that other subjects may be presented in such a way as to further these aims.

We know, too, that the confidence that these subjects effect a liberal education is no longer widespread. There is a shift in focus from attention to the experiences which a liberally educated person should have had, to the skills which that person should possess. But the quest for the nature of a liberal education does not thereby abate. In a sense its proponents express a powerful hope in search of its proper object. The belief is there.

Thus, while the certainty which accompanies that belief, and the specificity about the experiences which engender it are no longer firm, as they once were in the liberal arts college, they still exist. And, however tenuous, they still form the core of conviction for the "typical" liberal arts college, and define its role as well as its enduring contribution. The irony is that, as it is articulated the belief is in a product: the liberally educated person. But as it is really expressed in program, the belief is in a process, or, because that process is increasingly diverse and non-specific, in an ambience. Thus, the zeal that could be directed at redefining the "product" is often invested in maintaining that ambience.

V. THE DISTINCTIVENESS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

Summary

The preceding sections describe and emphasize six areas in which the liberal arts colleges are distinctive or make significant national contributions:

(1) The historical contribution of the early liberal arts colleges to the development of American higher education;

(2) The virtues of smallness in a system of higher education in which enrollment trends concentrate students in larger and larger institutions;

(3) Location and geographic access;

(4) Denominational affiliation, which preserves the traditional religiosity of the liberal arts college, and also expands this aspect of its role to more general emphasis on ethical development and value inquiry;

(5) Tax relief afforded by the provision of a "public function" through the payment of private tuition and philanthropic support;

(6) Models of excellence. While small private liberal arts colleges, precisely because of their "invisibility," have not been the most prominent leaders in curriculum innovation and other kinds of institutional change, there are among these institutions exciting examples of change, invention, imagination and vitality.

In a sense, the net effect of these contributions and distinctive features is the diversity usually cited by the proponents of private higher education (see, for example, Task Force of the National Council of Independent Colleges and Universities, 1974, p. 9).

While these contributions are impressive, they also point to weaknesses. Not many small liberal arts colleges display the vitality and imagination represented by the models of excellence discussed below. Furthermore, each of the distinctive aspects of these colleges has its pathological aspect. Though smallness is a virtue, many colleges are too small to sustain vitality and variety. Though rural settings are attractive, they can promote isolation and unreality. The denominational influence can be personally restrictive and intellectually stifling. Curricular prescription is not necessarily coherence, nor is flexibility necessarily true choice.

The Historical Contribution

Out of the model of the colonial liberal arts college developed, directly or indirectly, most of the diverse models of colleges and universities which comprise American higher education. Most early universities "grew out of" existing liberal arts colleges such as Harvard, Yale and Princeton; few of the early Universities were begun as research and graduate institutions (such as Stanford, Chicago, the Johns Hopkins and Clark were). The liberal arts college provided both the seed of such later institutions, as well as the still prevailing ethos that an undergraduate college is an integral part of a University complex. In spite of the logic available in the German University, whose research and specialized graduate functions were free-standing, as well as the natural tendency (even suggested and attempted in a few cases) for those functions to want to divorce themselves from the burden of undergraduate instruction, it has not been the American practice to do so.

The influence of the small liberal arts college is less apparent in the case of the technical institutions, but it has been the tendency of such institutions to assume some liberal arts functions in the past several decades. The appointment of outstanding humanistic scholars at institutions such as MIT and Cal. Tech., as well as the development of majors in the social sciences and even in the humanities, may not be directly attributable to the influence of the small liberal arts colleges, but these developments certainly represent the influence of the commitment they embody.

The teachers colleges resisted the tendency, apparent in other countries, to develop an exclusively pedagogical institution. In spite of the traditional tensions between the liberal arts faculties and those in departments of education or teacher training, the tendency has been, over time, for the functions to merge, and for these two activities, at worst, to coexist, and at best, to mutually support one another in the preparation of teachers. A certain cross-pollination is seen in the heavy emphasis, already noted, which the small liberal arts colleges place on professional education.

The influence of the liberal arts college on the development of the land grant institutions is not clear. The tendency was for states to found new institutions under the provisions of the Morrill Land Grant Act, but, less frequently, existing institutions served as the base of the land grant institution, which, to some extent, stood in opposition to the purposes of the existing liberal arts colleges.

The community college movement, the most powerful contemporary movement in higher education, has always had a strong emphasis upon general education. In fact a great deal of the tension inherent in such institutions may come from the traditional emphasis upon general educational requirements within many of the terminal Associate degree programs, and, certainly, all of the "transfer" programs. This tendency may be diminishing, but it has persisted. It is ironic that this spirit of liberal education has pervaded in the institution which perhaps more than any other, in terms of its unselective admissions, and diffused geographical locations, represents direct competition with the small liberal colleges.

The elite liberal arts colleges are of course the direct descendants of the small liberal arts colleges. They have, for the most part, shed their denominational identity, while maintaining, often in fairly traditional form, the structure of the classical liberal arts curriculum. There is, in fact, some evidence that such colleges are retaining the rigidity of that structure (in terms of course requirements) while their less selective counterparts are relaxing it.

Size

In 1972, fifty percent of American college and university students were enrolled in the nine percent of American institutions with enrollments of 10,000 students or more. Another 20 percent of the students attended moderately large institutions of from 5,000 to 9,999 enrollments. Although fully 25 percent of institutions had enrollments of 500 or less, only about 1.5 percent of all students were enrolled in them. An additional 4 percent were enrolled in the 542 institutions (20 percent of all institutions) which enrolled from 500 to 999 students (Grant and Lind, 1973).

For decades, but especially since the second World War, the trend has been to larger and larger institutions enrolling greater shares of the total college population. In this sense, the small liberal arts colleges are counter-trend.

Yet, as we have seen, there appear to be specific benefits attached directly to smallness. Empirical investigation (as discussed by Astin and Pace) bears out the conventional wisdom about small colleges: they are places of community cohesiveness, friendliness and cooperation. And, as Chickering (1969) has observed, redundancy--the increasing numbers which cause decreasing opportunities for individual participation and satisfaction--inhibits the forces operating for personal development. Feldman and Newcomb (1969) observe that "the conditions for campus-wide impacts appear to have been most frequently provided in small, residential, four-year colleges." (p. 331)

The ethos of American higher education is a small college ethos, even if the reality has moved rapidly in the other direction. But the prevalence of this ethos has caused even large universities to seek for ways to create small substructures within their large ones (unsuccessfully, I think).

The contribution of smallness to a college experience with maximum opportunities for personal growth is clear. But there are problems. It is generally felt that extremely small colleges--say, those under 500 students--are quite inefficient. In 1972 there were 629 such colleges. In times of extreme financial pressure such as at present, it would seem logical that, in the absence of compelling benefits, the diseconomies of extreme smallness are not reasonable.

There is a second problem, perhaps educationally more important. That is, the same forces which promote growth (resulting from opportunities for participation and satisfaction) also inhibit some kinds of growth as well as hinder socialization to certain aspects of the larger society. The function of socialization to adult life is certainly a role of the college. The small college provides an extremely supportive bridge to that subsequent environment. But is it entirely functional? In a culture dominated by the interplay of large and complex organizations, is it functional to socialize a student to adult roles in an institution whose size and complexity are easily comprehended? In a culture where the typical experience is urban, is it functional to socialize the student in a rural atmosphere in which a relatively gregarious person's network of acquaintances can comprise the entire incomming freshman class?

In addition to interpersonal experiences and opportunities, it seems doubtful that the typical very small colleges can provide a range of academic, cultural and recreational experiences to satisfy fairly diverse (and changing) interests. Astin (1975) has demonstrated that below enrollments of 500, colleges appear to exert a strong influence on increasing the dropout rate. Perhaps the factors discussed contribute to this.

Location

Whatever the unhealthy aspects of the proliferation of small liberal arts colleges (in terms, say, of excessive competition or marginal quality), the establishment of these colleges made enormous contribution to the provision of local access to higher education, and no doubt influenced contemporary thinking about geographic access and universal higher education opportunity. Tewksbury quotes Philip Lindsley (President of University of Nashville, 1837)--"Such institutions, scattered over the land, at convenient distances from each other, are better adapted to the habits, wants and circumstances of our widely dispersed and comparatively poor population." (Tewksbury, 1965, p. 3) The Protestant colleges, which tend to be rural, certainly provided such opportunities in an especial way for Protestant students, and Greeley (1969) emphasizes the historic role of the Catholic colleges, whose location in large cities made them crucial in the acculturation and upward mobility of sons and daughters of many of the predominantly Catholic immigrant groups. Yet such groups are now assimilated, and no longer need decompression chamber institutions to facilitate their social or economic mobility. As colleges experience the diminution of their traditional clientele, many are reaching out to attract new kinds of students.

Although this is taking place, for the pace to accelerate requires such colleges to accommodate themselves to radical changes. (1) They have been traditionally used to full time students of "normal" college age. Emerging "new" students are older, adults with job and family responsibilities precluding full time attendance. (2) The needs and interests of these students require a flexibility in the program which many liberal arts colleges are unaccustomed to (as well as a vocational emphasis which many of them are). (3) The traditional denominational emphasis may or may not prove hospitable to some kinds of "new students"--to ethnic minorities, for instance. (4) The "new students" whom Cross (1971) describes require educational resources, in terms of both money and human energy and competence, which the small liberal arts colleges may be unprepared to provide.

Withal, the location of many small liberal arts colleges provides an instrument for opportunity and access (in at least a few cases the only such instrument in a geographical area, which possesses immense potential to serve new clientele). The element of size also lends an additional dimension of potential warmth not available in many institutions which are available to serve such students.

Denominational Affiliation

Piety motivated the founding of our earliest colleges. Other purposes superseded piety: utility, egalitarianism, research, professional excellence. With the overshadowing of piety and traditional religion went, unfortunately, an emphasis upon character development which was a legacy of the British college model. That emphasis is resurfacing now under the concept of value orientation. Embracing notions of nondenominational morality, and ethical thought, it is badly needed. It may be that the church related college had no special claim on these functions. Yet, they are part of its patrimony. Additionally, as Pace has argued, the colleges retaining the strongest religious ties are those with the most distinctive institutional character. I believe this is true of both Protestant and Catholic colleges. This distinctive character tends also to be associated with smallness because, as an institution grows in size, it casts its net wider for a more diverse clientele, and undertakes more diverse functions.

The role of the consciously religious institution is an important one in preserving the valued diversity of American higher education. This diversity has been emphasized in more recent recognition of the need to preserve and support programs which emphasize cultural and ethnic distinctiveness, such as Afro-American studies programs. Certainly, religious heritage is equally important. Further, that religious heritage, and religious commitment can serve to further the purpose which the Carnegie Commission (1973) described as "the critical evaluation of society. . . through individual thought and persuasion. . . for the sake of society's self-renewal." (p. 1)

"Tax Relief"

Many institutions in our society are supported largely by private payments and contributions yet serve a public purpose: hospitals, welfare agencies, museums and private libraries and so forth. Private institutions of higher education frequently make the case that the existence of the private sector, with its expenses borne heavily by the student through tuition payments, and philanthropy through current gifts and endowment income, represents a form of relief to the taxpayer. Were it not for these institutions, presumably the students who now attend them would increase the demands placed on the public sector, and consequently increase tax support for higher education. (One source places the consequent "savings" at 2.9 billion dollars (*Task Force of the National Council of Independent Colleges and Universities*, 1974).) While the persuasiveness of this argument is diminished as declining enrollments under fixed costs permit *both* public and private institutions to absorb additional students at *lower marginal cost*, it is nonetheless a real contribution. Both the high cost of tuition and gift and endowment income represent contribution to the cost of a student education which presumably would be borne through tax revenues if that student were in a public institution. The net governmental costs are lower than they would be if there were no private sector.

Though the private liberal arts colleges represent a small share of this "contribution," their demise might entail not only a direct shift of costs to the public sector, but also add-on costs of education in larger institutions, where eagered bureaucracy adds administrative costs.

Models of Excellence

As I've mentioned before, one of the difficulties of discussing the small liberal arts college is that the image conjured up is frequently wrong. It is the image of Swarthmore, Antioch and Reed, colleges of a type which Clark has labeled distinctive. It is the image of Oberlin, Wheaton, Amherst and Earlham, which Keeton selected as strong liberal arts colleges in his study *Struggle and Promise* (1969), or, later in *Models and Mavericks* (1971) the vignettes of excellent colleges: Mills, Sarah Lawrence, Bowdoin and Knox.

These are misleading, in the sense that they are not truly representative of the small liberal arts college in the United States. They are, for the most part, highly selective, relatively affluent, nationally visible enough to be assured of a pool of applicants large enough to maintain a healthy enrollment. Their graduates frequently pursue graduate study in the "best" universities, thus assuring the college of a continued supply, through its alumni and the reputation they generate, of able and well trained faculty from those universities.

The small liberal arts colleges are just the opposite of this image. They are not very selective, financially marginal, struggling to recruit an adequate pool of applicants, usually from within the state or region. Sending few graduates to top universities for graduate study, they lack the automatic edge that affords in recruiting faculty from those institutions. Astin's term "invisible" is rich in connotation.

Yet there are models of excellence among these colleges. While they are not, in most cases, nationally visible, a problem created almost by definition for these colleges, they are exemplary in the lessons they provide not only for educational practice, but also for organizational renewal.

At Davis and Elkins College, West Virginia, a community effort to change and become distinctive resulted in a report recommending comprehensive changes in the college's program. These changes included the inauguration of four year-long interdisciplinary problem-centered courses (human freedom, the quest for creative life style, emancipation of the modern mind, the future) as well as a new academic division to facilitate temporary experimental courses, and the extensive shift from lecture to seminar mode of instruction. These extensive changes required a comprehensive program of faculty development, which has been carried out with external support.

And at a time when the relationship between work and education is becoming the central discussion in higher education, Warren Wilson College in North Carolina reminds us that since its founding, in 1894, it has had a program of mandatory work for all students. The meaningful aspect of this work is emphasized not only by important contribution to physical plant construction and maintenance, but also by the fact that it is evaluated, as is academic work, and sanctioned by removal from the program (involving loss of the work-related subsidy of student board and room charges). While the college admits to tension between the work and study, this model, along with those of other liberal arts colleges which have instituted such programs, provides one practical response to the serious involvement of the college student in productive labor.

At Lone Mountain College in California, under a FIPSE grant, the undergraduate program is being reorganized by integrating the liberal arts curriculum with career and occupational programs. The reorganization focuses on a core general education curriculum which utilizes interdisciplinary courses, affective learning modules and internships. These internal changes are supported by a media instruction and resource center which makes available programmed learning and individualized courses using various media techniques, as well as independent study learning contracts and credit for field placement. At the same time, the college is using the career and liberal arts integration to reach out to new clientele through such programs as a legal specialist and teacher aid internship programs, and an external graduate degree in psychology.

The College of St. Rose in New York offers another illustration of a small liberal arts college which has made significant efforts to adapt both internally and externally. The college offers both an early matriculation program for high school students wishing early entry to college, as well as a degree program for adults which provides credit for professional experience. It has built special transfer arrangements with two-year colleges and proprietary and business schools. There is a cooperative work study program with IRS, and government service internships. The college calendar has been changed to 4-1-4 (Four-one-four is a recent and now widely adopted academic calendar in which two semesters of four months are interrupted by an intersemester of one month (typically January) which is available for intensive experience, frequently off campus.), and a variety of independent study and individualized opportunities exist, including a special studies major which is student determined, and an interdisciplinary major. The curriculum includes several team taught, interdisciplinary and and multi-media courses. To facilitate these changes, the college has an educational policies committee which monitors academic planning and innovative proposals.

Ottawa University has a program in which students draw up educational contracts with the help of an advising committee. An office of educational facilitation exists for the purpose of such advising and aiding in contract development for students, as well as to create and administer a network of educational opportunities. There is also a multidisciplinary center to study alternative models of academic organization, and to support a curriculum which emphasizes individualized graduation contracts. Also in support of this approach, the University has initiated faculty development contracts, which are designed to develop faculty skills to meet the professional needs of this redesigned curriculum. The facilitation of this individualized program is also assisted through an extensive modularization of the curriculum.

Alverno College in Wisconsin has been a leader in the development of undergraduate "competency based" curriculum. The liberal arts curriculum has been revised in such a way that the standards for earning a Bachelor's degree are based upon demonstrated competence rather than course accumulation. Alverno is seeking to integrate this purpose with the development at the same time of marketable skills in its graduates. There are 11 competency areas in the liberal arts program, and graduation requires the achievement of competency at a specified level (each area has six levels) in eight of these. Competency may be demonstrated by course completion or, in some cases, independent assessment.

These examples are not meant to suggest a comprehensive review of the scope and functions of the group of colleges which they represent. They are indicative of vitality, leadership and self-reneal, as well as of standards of excellence which are specific to institutional mission, location and clientele.

It is ironic that, in spite of these activities, many of these colleges still face fiscal marginality (as we will discuss in the next section). Especially in the case of internal change, renewal does not necessarily guarantee survival. Yet these examples demonstrate the ability of colleges, even with limited resources, to reach out to new clientele, and at the same time redesign programs so as to better serve new students as well as their traditional ones. I think these and the many other examples of vitality and renewal among the small liberal arts colleges emphasize the fact that vigor and renewal is not necessarily a function of resources or visibility. Equally important, any attempt to assess the contributions made by such institutions must acknowledge and consider unique factors of location, clientele, resources, mission, and environment.

VI. THE FISCAL CRISIS -- AND SOME COMPLICATING FACTORS

Summary

There is a fiscal crisis in the small liberal arts colleges today, but the extent and exact nature is not precisely known.

Several things are known:

(1) Inflation, rising college costs (and the difficulty of raising tuition to cover these costs), increasing student aid expense, all these contribute to a fairly common deficit between operating expenses and income in private institutions.

(2) Though some observers hesitate to call them a crisis, there is somewhat general agreement that a problem exists, which, given the heavy dependence upon tuition of these institutions, and their prospects for shrinking enrollment, is likely to get worse.

(3) The enrollment projections constitute a crisis in and of themselves, for that reason. Most private colleges are dependent upon sustained enrollment for fiscal health.

(4) A "crisis of purpose," if that is not too cosmic a phrase, is related to, and certainly exacerbated by, these two crises. If institutional signals are mixed, or weak, or confused, then the ability to sustain enrollment may be impaired, ability to attract contributions may decline, and internal efficiency (because of the risk of undertaking too many and varied tasks) may deteriorate.

The Fiscal Crisis

The golden age of growth in higher education during the 1960's is well-known. Between 1959-60 and 1969-70:

(1) Private enrollment grew 55 percent while public enrollment increased 177 percent;

(2) Average private tuition rose 93 percent;

(3) Per capita personal disposable income rose 64 percent;

(4) Education and general expenditures in the private sector (primarily instructional costs, sponsored research, and physical plant maintenance and operation) rose 237 percent;

(5) Student aid expenditures rose 472 percent.

During the period 1967-1972, when colleges were making substantial commitments to new students and new programs, they also began to feel the effects of several converging financial pressures. Early indications were masked by the attention given to student unrest but the signs were persistent. The slower rate of enrollment growth meant less rapid increases in tuition income to cover the burgeoning costs of financial aid and new programs. The rapid rise in faculty salaries during the 'sixties (five to seven percent per year for the whole decade) became a strong factor as tuition income leveled, other costs rose, endowment resources dipped, and federal funds (annually expected) either declined or failed to materialize.

Many institutions began running annual deficits, deferring needed maintenance, freezing faculty salaries, making across-the-board budget cuts, and allowing vacancies to remain unfilled as costs continued to rise faster than income. Studies began appearing in 1970 which documented the

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N.B. This section was prepared by Gordon B. Van de Water, a doctoral student at Syracuse University, to whom I am most grateful.

new era of financial distress. One of the earliest was Hans Jenny and Richard Wynn's The Golden Years (1970) using longitudinal data for the period 1960-1968 from a sample of 48 private liberal arts colleges. While the authors found wide variations among individual institutions in their sample, they were able to extract the following general trends in income and expenditure flows in private four year liberal arts colleges:

(1) In each year income exceeds expense by a small amount

(2) During the period 966-1968 the number of colleges showing a surplus on current account declined sharply

(3) Simultaneously, the number of deficits is increasing and reached its maximum in 1968;

(4) Colleges appear wedded to the status quo in the manner in which they allocate their scarce resources

(5) Student aid expenditures are the fastest growing cost element for the institutions in this study.

The remarkable growth of the 'sixties documented in this study foreshadows the impending financial distress. Jenny and Wynn, in their follow-up study, The Turning Point (1972), confirmed their earlier suspicions that private liberal arts colleges might be in trouble: ". . . it is quite clear that the financial pinch is not an isolated phenomenon and that it is not a minor problem." (p. 29)

The authors identify five factors which underlie the financial pinch: the decline in public confidence; a change in public and private priorities; accountability pressures; faculty power without responsibility; and the quality of management. To combat the situation, Jenny and Wynn prescribe "greater efficiency and increased productivity," primarily through "a moderate increase in the mean student-faculty ratio" and "a public effort to provide students generally with adequate funds to attend the college or university of their individual choice." (p. 63)

Cheit, in his report for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, sought to document the financial troubles of 41 colleges and universities (both public and private) (Cheit, 1971).

In assessing 41 institutions' financial condition, Cheit found 18 "headed for financial trouble," 11 "in financial difficulty," and 12 "not in financial trouble." Of the 14 liberal arts colleges included in the Cheit study, 4 were found to be not in financial difficulty, 6 were headed for financial difficulty, and 4 were in financial difficulty. Only the private universities, more affected by cutbacks in federal research grants and foundation support, presented a worse composite picture.

The source of private colleges' financial troubles is the growing gap between income and expenditures. Factors pushing expenditures higher each year include: (1) the effects of inflation; (2) rising faculty salaries; (3) campus disturbances, theft, and destruction of property; (4) rising student aid; and (5) growth in responsibilities, activities, and aspirations. Only the last two are amenable to substantial institutional control and they require hard decisions. Cheit, using his most conservative estimates, projects an increase in the rate of expenditure of 5.2 percent per student per year. More realistically, he expects a 6.4 percent per student per year growth.

On the income side, private colleges receive about 96 percent of their resources from: tuition and fees (39 percent), the federal government (33 percent), gifts and grants (18 percent), and endowment income (6 percent). Cheit's projection is that private institutions "cannot expect income to grow even as much as 5 percent per student per year." (p. 115) The cost-income squeeze apparent here is the leading problem of private liberal arts colleges in the 'seventies. Cheit concludes, "One thing all schools have in common is that they are likely to be in financial difficulty if the present trends continue." (p. 152)

While Cheit's approach can be faulted on several grounds--a non-statistical sample, imprecise definitions of financial distress criteria, non-comparability of institutional data, among others--it did serve to make the financial woes of private institutions generally known and to highlight general trends as well as indicate the need for better, more uniform information.

Appearing about the same time as the Cheit study was Jellema's The Red and the Black (1971), done for the Association of American Colleges. Jellema surveyed the entire membership of the AAC which is composed of all but 29 of the private, four year, accredited institutions of higher learning in America. The 1970 questionnaire was returned by over 75 percent of the membership (554 institutions), thus making it the most broadly based of any study during this period. Additionally, the non-respondent population was shown to be essentially similar to the responding institutions so generalizations to all private four year, accredited institutions could validly be made.

Looking at the overall figures, the "average," i.e. the statistical composite, institution showed a small surplus in fiscal 1968 and was running a deficit by the end of 1970. Patterns varied by regions of the country, but one "average" statistic was uniform--by June of 1970 the "average" institution in every region was "firmly in the red." Jellema goes on to emphasize that this is

> not a contrived "deficit," not an indirect student aid "deficit" (which all private institutions have been running for years), not the kind of "deficit" administrators sometimes submit to their boards to stimulate giving, not the "deficit" sometimes reported before annual gift money or contributed services provided by a religious order are included as income, but an actual current fund deficit: akin to the kind you and I have when our total account expenditures are larger than our total actual incomes (p. 5).

Jellema presents his statistics from a variety of perspectives yet always comes to the same conclusion:

> Private colleges and universities are apprehensive and they have reason to be. Most colleges in the red are staying in the red and many are getting redder, while colleges in the black are generally growing grayer. Taken collectively, they will not long be able to serve higher education and the nation with strength unless significant aid is soon forthcoming (p. 28).

Jellema's follow-up study of one year later is even more pessimistic. The deficits it presented were, on average, higher than projected and new projections assume even larger deficits. "The situation is getting worse, not better. For all of their brave talk, as a group they have not 'turned the corner.'" (p. 17)

As a statistical portrait these two studies are much stronger than Cheit's study. The major drawback from a policy perspective is the use of localized projections of financial conditions. As with any projections, their reliability is suspect, but given the fact that local administrators made the projections based on current year experience it is difficult to regard them as more than fears born of hard times even when neatly cumulated and statistically manipulated. They do, however, reflect the gloom prevalent on many campuses in the early 'seventies.

In From Red to Black? (Jellema, 1973), the book based on these studies, Jellema re-presents his data and adds a current summative statement: ". . . while finances appear generally better in the short run, the prospects show no significant improvement in the long run." (p. 28) Cheit, in his own follow-up study two years later, found a "fragile stability" for the present but agreed with the more pessimistic long range evaluation offered by Jellema (Cheit, 1973).

Other studies,[1] not reviewed here, also added to the growing awareness that private colleges and universities were experiencing financial distress of varying severity. Not all expert voices were of the same opinion, however. Brookings economist Alice Rivlin, summarizing her thinking for a Congressional subcommittee in 1971, said, "My own impressions from available studies and conversations with higher educators is that there is no general crisis of higher education finance. Rather, there are several sets of factors affecting various kinds of institutions in various ways at the same time, some permanent and some temporary." (Rivlin, Hearing, p. 776) While she lists the problems of private institutions, including "expensive commitments to scholarship programs," (p. 777) she concludes that "it is certainly not obvious that a program of general support for higher education is the appropriate answer to all or even most of these varied financial problems." (p. 777)

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[1] See, for example, F.E. Balderston, "The Varieties of Financial Crisis," American Council on Education, 1971; Howard R. Bowen, The Finance of Higher Education, Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1968; Howard R. Bowen and Gordon K. Douglass, Efficiency in Liberal Education, The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1971; William G. Bowen, The Economics of Major Private Universities, Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1968; James C. Byrnes and A. Dale Tussing, "The 'Financial Crisis' in Higher Education," Syracuse University Research Corporation, December, 1971.

Columbia Research Associates, in their report prepared for the U.S. Office of Education, were even more blunt in their conclusion. For the period 1967-68 to 1969-70, they say, "it is necessary to conclude that colleges' financial well-being has not significantly worsened. . . . In summary, we cannot support the conclusions elsewhere (Jenny, Cheit, Jellema) that higher education in general is facing a discouragingly bleak financial future." (pp. 33, 34) They base this conclusion on their analysis of 50 pre-doctoral institutions for the period Fall 1967 to Spring 1970. They note that previous studies have shown wide differences in institutions' class sizes, student-teacher ratios, faculty teaching loads, and faculty salaries. The report suggests that these variations can be explained as a response by the individual institution to its "constituency," i.e. its own students, faculty, and administrators. High- vs. low-cost college constituencies must be taken into account before a judgment can be made as to whether or not an institution is operating efficiently.

Columbia Research Associates divide their sample into three subsets based on type of instruction offered:

(1) "Academic institutions"--academic achievement stressed and competition is severe; admissions are highly selective; individual attention, low student-faculty ratios, small class sizes, and low teaching loads prevail. These colleges are expensive.

(2) "Utilitarian schools"--provide pre-professional training in areas such as engineering, technology, law, business administration and social work. These colleges are least expensive.

(3) "General schools"--find their students among those who are not the best qualified academically and who are perhaps not ready to make a career commitment." (p. 14)

While they carry these classifications through their report in all tables, the descriptive emphasis is largely on the more traditional divisions based on type of control--public, independent, religious.

The entire report is poorly written and difficult to follow. Its two main uses are in suggesting that high costs may be unavoidable in some institutions and that some statistical evidence exists to counterbalance the conclusions of Jenny, Cheit, and Jellema. Even so, the report does state that "'independent' institutions as a group are evidently undergoing the most severe financial squeeze, with expenditures consistently expanding more rapidly than revenues." (p. 36)

The National Commission on Financing Postsecondary Education, established in part to clarify the fuzzy financial distress situation, concludes that

> Based on the analysis of selected statistical evidence, the financial status of the postsecondary education enterprise is not substantially jeopardizing the achievement of postsecondary education objectives. Some postsecondary institutions, however, are already in financial distress, and, if present patterns and conditions of financing continue, there is a high probability that such distress will occur in several sectors of postsecondary education as well (National Commission on Financing Postsecondary Education, 1973).

These differences of opinion are generally based on the general perspective taken by the analyst. Depending on which institutions one uses and which financial statistics are extracted, a varying view of financial distress emerges. Even those who do not recognize a general "crisis," however, do see financial pressures as a growing problem, particularly in the private sector. Overall there is enough evidence "to provide sufficient justification for genuine concern." (p. 193)

Summary: Fiscal Distress and Related Crises

The weight of evidence indicates that private four year liberal arts colleges have experienced considerable financial difficulty. Continued inflation, highlighted by soaring energy costs, continue to pressure these colleges. In an era of general economic slowdown it is doubtful if they will soon be rid of the necessity to watch their expenditures closely while trying to maximize their resources without pricing themselves out of the market.

While the "crisis" atmosphere has abated recently, it has been replaced with the realization that steady financial pressure has become a part of the environment for private liberal arts colleges. How they cope with it will in large part determine their future place in the postsecondary education enterprise.

Implicit in this discussion as well as in the preceding sections, and exacerbating the fiscal crisis, has been the struggle of the small liberal arts colleges to maintain enrollment strength. Since the greater part of their income comes from tuition, enrollment is a critical factor in fiscal health.

Yet, as much of our previous discussion implies, many of these colleges are finding it difficult to maintain enrollments. This is certainly the important factor behind their development of programs designed to attract new clientele.

If conditions are now difficult for them, they will likely get worse. As we know, total enrollment in higher education is increasing at a much slower pace than during the past two decades, and is expected to decline in 1982. First time degree credit enrollment is projected to decline in 1978 (Simon and Frankel, 1974). Some observers expect declines sooner, with more extensive enrollment loss than predicted by the Office of Education, as a result of declining returns (both real and perceived) to the college degree (Freeman and Hollomon, 1975).

The effects of these patterns on private colleges and universities are expected to be profound. The "interim Master Plan" of the New York State Regents (The University of the State of New York, 1974) points out that high school graduates in New York State will decline (from 1973 levels) 15.4 percent by 1985, and 31.3 percent by 1990. Predicting a period of "relative stability" for private institutions from 1974 to 1980, the report projects 1990 enrollments for private institutions in New York State at a low of 134,500 and a high of 151,600 (against actual 1973 enrollments of 169,900). Thus, within 15 years, the most optimistic projections indicate a decline of 11 percent, the pessimistic projection a decline of 22 percent.

"Crisis of purpose" is a phrase that is fashionable, but probably accurate to describe one problem widely affecting the small liberal arts colleges. Quite illustrative of the ample literature which discusses this topic: is a recent statement by McGrath (1975), who has long spoken on this topic:

> If the colleges of liberal arts have the nerve to retrieve their independence and reestablish their traditional functions of preparing youth to live an informed life committed to personal and civic fulfillment,

> they can restore values to a central position in undergraduate education, and at the same time elevate the quality of our national life (p. 27).

This crisis is real, but the prescriptions are diverse, and agreement on them does not exist. Green (1975) has proposed a new interpretation of liberal learning, as a type of moral education related to the discovering of meaning in vocation.

> These observations suggest that the core of the new liberal learning is to be found in the social sciences and to some extent in those areas of knowledge directly related to the professions. Really good training in the social sciences permits people a kind of sixth sense of discernment which allows them to read the signs of the times--to sense the state of the world in which they are involved and then to select the places, the times and the means for action. . . It is a defect, however, that the social sciences are thus the core of liberal learning and at the heart of moral education. They have the capacity, at their best, to instruct us in the skills of action. But they are not evocative. . . For these reasons liberal learning requires those aspects of learning that are essentially literary, dramatic, symbolic and mythic (pp. 34-5).

If this is taken to suggest a way in which the liberal arts can be integrated with a "vocational" program, it may be a more realistic outlook than McGrath's, which appears to be a sort of call to rediscover the "pure" liberal arts emphasis. The reality of the crisis of purpose is simply that the market for this approach is dwindling--it was never large--and the variety of institutions which can fulfill it is enormous. But the variety, indeed the number, of institutions which have rediscovered a satisfactory balance between liberal learning and career preparation will never be large. If this can be called a crisis, the reality of shifting student interest, societal demands, disciplinary pursuits and challenge to define the "outcomes" of liberal learning, well then, it is a crisis that sets a demanding and interesting task for the small liberal arts college.

VII. JUSTIFICATION FOR EXISTENCE: THE PRIVATE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE AS A NATIONAL RESOURCE

Summary

This concluding section attempts to delineate the overall contribution of the small liberal arts college to the "system" of higher education in the United States, and draw some conclusions regarding governmental policy and research based upon that contribution: Specifically:

(1) Because of their size, location, denominational affiliation, and limited selectivity, the small liberal arts colleges make a valuable contribution to U.S. higher education.

(2) Federal policy cannot effectively provide institutional assistance as a response to this contribution (except in limited cases, such as FIPSE project grants which encourage institutional "renewal").

(3) At the state level, more specific judgment can be made about the contributions such institutions make in relation to the state system of higher education and in terms of their own quality (a judgment made with difficulty at the federal level).

(4) We need better information about these colleges, one element of which is a set of case studies which would begin to establish some dimension to the diverse range of institutions included under small, less selective liberal arts colleges

There is no doubt that the small private colleges have played a significant role in the history of American higher education, and represent, as a "system" of institutions, an important national resource in higher educational opportunity today. There is also no doubt that, of all institutional types, the small liberal arts colleges are most "at risk" in terms of survival. (See, for example, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, More than Survival, 1975, pp. 61 and 74.)

The dimensions of the national resource represented by this network of institutions have been detailed by this paper. I have discussed the fact that these colleges represent the initial historical strain on which the existing system was built.

Because of their size, these institutions represent the only group of institutions, really, in which the ideals of community are maximized. The effects on this of contributions to student development are substantial and positive. This feature of the atmosphere of the small liberal arts college is unique to it. (I have also noted, though, that this feature appears to involve a systematic tradeoff with respect to intellectuality and aspiration.)

Geographic location of the liberal arts college provides a diversity of local higher education opportunity: for rural students in the case of those of Protestant affiliation; for urban students in the case of those of Catholic affiliation. In some cases, perhaps not many, the college may represent the only such opportunity available in a given area. This fact is not often given attention.

The denominationalism of the majority of these colleges (or, where local circumstances have caused them to attenuate that denominationalism, the historical link with religious bodies) is a distinctive feature of the small liberal arts colleges. As distinctive as the mission of the technological institutions, public community colleges or research universities, this denominationalism is an aspect of diversity of American higher education that is valuable and necessary to preserve.

Because the colleges we have been discussing are relatively less selective than are more elite and visible liberal arts colleges, they offer equality of access to a wider range of students with respect to academic background. Because they are less expensive, typically, than those other colleges, that opportunity is not as limited by low family income. In an earlier section, I did discuss the way in which small liberal arts colleges frequently represent, for first-generation collegians, a supportive atmosphere in which to acquire cultural and economic means of upward mobility. Because of its size, denominational affiliation and proximity to home and rural location, it will frequently represent for such students a lesser break with home environment, and a greater opportunity to adjust to the socialization to adulthood which college represents.

There is no doubt that these factors, and those discussed in previous sections, add up to a significant national resource. Within the context of the entire "system" of American higher education (and, perhaps, the entire range of American postsecondary education) the small private liberal arts colleges play and have played a role which has made significant contributions historically, and currently represent a significant contribution to access, choice, diversity, and program alternatives.

Governmental Policy and the Small Liberal Arts College

In attempting to relate this contribution to governmental policy, however, some important problems arise.

At the federal level, since 1965, and especially since the Education Amendments of 1972, emphasis has been moving away from the encouragement and support of specific functions and programs in higher education, to a primary concern with student access and choice. These policies are implemented largely through the student aid programs, within the framework of existing available institutional opportunities. Except in the case of "developing institutions," which concern focuses upon the traditionally black colleges, the federal government policy has not currently emphasized preserving or extending the current range of institutional opportunities. The aid-to-student policy can potentially benefit private institutions substantially, especially if funded to the maximum amounts authorized and changes in the formulas for determining size of grants.

A strong case can also be made for the exemplary nature of project grants on a competitive basis, such as those made by FIPSE, some of which have stimulated significant renewal in small institutions.

The basis for an argument about the federal obligation to directly support or sustain small liberal arts colleges, admitting their vulnerability, is a weak one.

The important locus of policy with respect to the small liberal arts college would seem most logically to be the state rather than the federal government. In fact, the number and variety of state programs which directly assist private institutions of higher education is impressive. Currently, 41 states have such programs. (See Education Commission of the States, 1975.) The mix of such programs, involving scholarships, loans, contracts to private institutions, facilities grants and loans, and so forth, is extremely diverse. Student assistance programs are the most popular of these, all 41 of the states having some form of "state scholarship" program. In 1974-75, over three-quarters of a million students were aided by such programs, receiving over one-half billion dollars in aid. Though exact proportions are not available, a large share of this aid tends to flow to students attending private institutions.

In spite of the existence of diverse state programs of support to private institutions, such programs don't seem to reflect consciously articulated state policy so much as the need to respond to the financial crises of the private institutions, especially since the early 1960's. It does not seem that a consciously articulated state policy towards private higher education exists, upon which can be built an integrated program of support, as well as specific response to the problems of the small liberal arts colleges.

Upon what bases would such a policy be built? It would seem that there are at least five major factors upon which such a policy might be built: these factors are the level of state interest in the existence, quality, function, purpose and performance of private (including small liberal arts) colleges. The state interest in the existence or survival of such institutions can be presumed from historical evidence. Aspects of the questions of existence have to do with the state's interest in diversity, choice, access, prevention of public monopoly in higher education, symbolic value, community benefits and economic impact.

The state also may be interested in the quality of private institutions, though tools for monitoring and maintaining quality are scarce and unsophisticated.

The state may also be interested in certain functions of private institutions, as indicated by existing contractual programs (with medical schools, for instance), in several states.

The state may be interested in certain of the purposes pursued by private institutions, especially those which don't fall within the capability of the state to pursue directly (sectarian higher education, for instance).

Finally, the state may be interested in certain outcomes of private higher education (related directly to purpose, though not always consistent with it). While this may be the most obvious question illuminating the existence of state interest in private higher education, it is by no means simple. If state purposes are seen as in the public interest, but are not accompanied by relevant outcomes, what can we say about the argument for state support? And the measurement and identification of outcomes is no less complex and difficult a matter for institutions than it is for individual courses and programs. Among many problems is that one outcome of higher education is certainly student satisfaction, which is both tenuous and impossible to determine in advance.

While using these factors as the basis for establishment of state policy towards private higher education certainly raises some problems, it does solve others.

First, it tends to give such policy local relevance. The state is in a much better position than the federal government to deal with questions such as the quality, functions and outcomes of institutions, and their relevance to state interest, as well as the question of existence or survival, and the justification of survival in light of state interest. Any federal answer to these questions would be phrased so broadly as to lose entirely the local (statewide) nature of the contribution made by the small liberal arts colleges. Such a determination made on a national level would diminish or eliminate much of the real nature of the distinctiveness of the small private colleges. The contribution which such a college may make on the basis of being a primary avenue of access to higher education for students in a geographic area, or the provision of a collegiate setting much more hospitable to the needs and problems of relatively low-achieving students, or response to specific denominational tradition (as well as to a local community where that tradition may be extremely important) and other such contributions can much more easily be assessed at the state level than at the federal level.

One form of aid which to some extent bridges the gap between federal and state government is the stimulation of State Scholarship programs through the recently enacted (and popular) State Student Incentive Grant program (SSIG). Funded for the first time only in 1974, the program has 44 billion dollars appropriated for it in Fiscal Year 1977. The SSIG program has great potential benefit for small private liberal arts colleges for several reasons. First, the other programs of federal aid are insufficient, in themselves, to create conditions of maximum choice, as between public and private institutions, for most students. Because of certain limitations, in maximum awards, and basis for need determination, thus far the public colleges have been a more attractive choice. The institutions least able to compensate for shortfalls in individual federal awards are colleges with limited resources to use to augment federal aid. Secondly, the SSIG stimulates state programs of student support, which appear to have been most responsive to the problems of private institutions, in terms of maximum level of individual awards. Thirdly, such programs, allowing state award to combine with federal (subject to maximum need limitations), allow private institutions to compete somewhat more fairly for students with public institutions. This situation may be somewhat better for the colleges we are considering, since their tuitions are, on the average, lower than those at elite liberal arts colleges, and they therefore are at somewhat less of a price disadvantage than the latter in relation to the public institutions.

Still, there are two problems with student support programs, even at increasing funding levels. First, since they are virtually all based upon demonstrated need, it means that the competitive price advantage of public over private institution may be ameliorated for the low income student, but not for the higher income student. Since the liberal arts clientele is traditionally a middle to upper middle class market, this means that it must broaden its attractiveness to a group of students not historically served. Second, at least some of the states with significant scholarship programs (such as California, Indiana and Michigan) base them partially upon academic competition. This puts at a disadvantage precisely those institutions which have been only moderately selective, a characteristic, as we have seen, typical of many of the small liberal arts colleges. Perhaps the SSIG program offers an instrument to bring about a change in this policy at the state level, although thus far the attitude towards this policy has been permissive.

Research

A good deal of research is currently taking place on the small liberal arts college. One gap in that research is a series of case studies of small private less selective liberal arts colleges. Few exist, although important case studies have been done on all other institutional types. For example, a book of such studies, Reisman and Stadman's Academic Transformation (1973) includes 17 such studies, of institutions and institutional change, none of which describe a small liberal arts college of the type this paper discusses.

Such case studies can (1) serve as powerful exemplars of institutional renewal and response to crisis (or lack of such response); (2) improve the visibility of such institutions, especially in the community of policy-makers and researchers in higher education, where it has been low; (3) improve evidence in making the "case" for small private liberal arts colleges, a case which is too often made on rhetorical claims and exhortations, too seldom on "hard" data.

Perhaps most importantly, such a group of studies could assist in creating some sort of classification system for this greatly diverse group of institutions, so that both policy and research could be pursued with a much more detailed and illuminating body of data.

Conclusion

It seems clear that the small private liberal arts colleges are a national resource, an important part of the national system of higher education. The present course of federal policy would seem to make it equally clear that a response of categorical federal financial support to that role is not appropriate.

State policy has been so constructed as to distinguish between institutions on the basis of control and function, and to support private institutions, and in some cases institutions with particular missions. The state is in a position, unlike the federal government, to make some judgments about the importance of such missions. While it cannot, of course, directly support the mission of denominational higher education, it can support the other missions which we have related to the size of small liberal arts colleges: an environment in which community may flourish, provision of educational opportunity for students of moderate ability and aspiration, and limited geographic mobility. To do so through institutional grants would be to assume that state governments could make policy which recognized unanimity of characteristics in small liberal arts colleges which I have repeatedly disclaimed in this paper. To do so through the indirect means of student support would be to reduce the greatest threat to the survival of such institutions: the inequitable price competition of public institutions. Under such conditions, whether or not a small college survived would be more a matter of the attractiveness of its programs, distinctive environment and heritage, rather than its cost. After all, the ability of an undergraduate institution to maintain a student clientele, at least under somewhat fair competitive conditions, is the only empirical evidence we have of its justification for existence. If students are not attracted, it may have served a significant historical purpose, but is no longer an important resource within the system of higher education in its community or state. Further, basing such aid on demonstrated need reduces the risk that unresponsive institutions will be sustained (through institutional aid) or that institutions serving as shelters for affluent children from public institutions serving low income students will be rewarded (through capitation grants). Consequently, it seems probable that, even with a combination of state scholarship programs, federal student support, and the stimulus of the federal SSIG programs, some small liberal arts institutions are likely not to survive. Recent history is the best predictor of that. The purpose of this project, and the record of institutional failure are both products of that history. Since 1972, 77 private colleges have closed, gone public or merged. Twenty-eight of these belong in the "Liberal Arts Colleges II" category which has been the focus of this paper. Twenty-one of those have actually closed (rather than having merged or gone public) (Chronicle of Higher Education, Sept. 22, 1975).

Some liberal arts colleges seem unlikely candidates for a similar list published in 1980 or 1985: those who in the academic strength of their student body and faculty resemble the "elite" institutions; those with distinct denominational clientele and a firm policy of serving that clientele with a clear religious mission; those who have sought to reach out vigorously to new kinds of students--adults, part time students, students in specific work settings, and so forth; those who have dedicated themselves to the work of institutional renewal, as reflected in reconstructed programs or institutional purposes. These "models" of institutional patterns have been discussed in this paper. In a sense they reflect the models of excellence which are unlikely to be abandoned by their clientele, especially if governmental policies make enrollment in those colleges easier for that clientele (by extending financial aid to part time and adult students who till now have been largely excluded from such programs of student aid).

I do not know what proportion such colleges may represent of the total of the small liberal arts colleges which have been discussed in this paper. They may be the majority, but I doubt that they are. Will it be sufficient for the others to work at what they have traditionally done, in a conscientious and honest way? Probably not. Higher education and its environment are changing rapidly. The demographic pattern is changing: latest USOE projections (Simon and Frankel, 1975) indicate a downturn in total higher education enrollment in 1982, and a drop in first time degree credit enrollment in 1978. The proportion of part time students continues to increase. The relationship between work and education and the perceived value of education for work is changing.

Freeman and Holloman (1975) point out that the economic returns to the college degree and the perception of those returns have both declined, adversely affecting the rate of college-going among high school seniors. Accordingly, student needs and expectations are changing, as well as are patterns of college attendance.

In the midst of these and other changes, a college may either be able to reaffirm its dedication to a traditional mission and clientele, or it may vigorously adapt to its understanding of changed conditions. But it cannot drift, it cannot ignore change, and it cannot expect survival to be externally guaranteed.

Those colleges which undertake to renew themselves within the context of a traditional mission, or to redefine that mission for themselves, deserve an environment which provides favorable odds for survival. Reasonably fair competitive conditions would provide those odds. The provision of student support through state and federal sources, and intelligent coordination of the two, would move the system of higher education towards that competitive equilibrium.

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CHAPTER III

FIELD STUDIES

Introduction

Ten on-site field investigations of closed or merged invisible colleges are reported in this chapter. In each case, efforts were made to obtain as a full picture as possible of the context in which the college operated to determine, from reports and interviews, the major causes for each failure. Almost without exception, the demise of a college carried with it emotional overtones, sometimes subtle and sometimes explicit. Because of this sensitive aspect of the investigations, the names of the colleges have been disguised; and references and footnotes have also been omitted, since they were frequently from college bulletins and local newspapers which, if listed, would identify specific institutions.

An attempt was made to select various types of invisible colleges for in-depth study; women only, coed, independent and religiously affiliated, central city, rural and suburban, the East, South, West, and Midwest are represented. The studies were conducted using the hypotheses and questionnaire in the Field Study Guide (see Appendix C) and as a beginning point for determining the causes of demise. The case studies represent the opinions of the authors.

The Closing of Alpha College
And Its
Consolidation with Omega University

Richard W. Jonsen

John F. Murphy

III.1

The Closing of Alpha College
And Its
Consolidation with Omega University

It seems quite likely that many factors played a part in the failure of Alpha College and its eventual consolidation with Omega University. While official records show a merger or consolidation, there are really two distinct events: a closing and a consolidation (or merger). None of the Alpha College students were enrolled there after its consolidation with Omega University. None of the major administrators carried over. None of the faculty carried over. Even though there was uninterrupted operation of Alpha College between the spring of 1971, when its last student graduated, and fall of 1971, when it opened as Alpha College of Omega University, these are two separate institutional sagas. For clarity's sake, the former institution will be referred to as Alpha College, and the latter as Alpha College--Omega University.

Alpha College is located in a geographic area of a large metropolitan region. It was a women's Catholic liberal arts college, with a commuter enrollment which, in the mid-sixties, was about 300 students. This area, whose population is several hundred thousand, is distinctive for its: (1) insularity; (2) religious homogeneity (about 60 percent Roman Catholic); (3) socio-economic homogeneity (middle class, with a very high percentage of civil servants; relatively conservative Italians and Irish). Alpha College was founded as a Roman Catholic institution and continued this identification even as many institutions liberalized or became independent for religious, philosophical, legal and pragmatic reasons. Omega University is located about 30 miles from Alpha College in another geographic area of the same metropolitan region. It too is Roman Catholic in its historical and present identification.

Alpha College was founded in 1931 by a women's religious congregation. Its foundress continued as President until 1965. A woman of vision, intelligence, devotion and considerable will, she had preserved the college through extraordinarily difficult times (a depression, World War II, and the post-war college boom). She had given it stability and purpose, but the purpose, as well as the plans, were singularly hers. She was the visible external symbol of the college, and her authority was, apparently, not widely shared within its organization.

In 1965, the founding President retired, and was succeeded by a member of the Congregation who had served as Academic Dean. At that time, the Board of Trustees was dominated by members of the local congregation and by members of the congregation's other institutions. There were several laymen on the Board which customarily met annually, but only briefly and largely pro forma. It seems generally believed that the Board's role in the management of the college was weak and unimportant.

If the Board was weak, the influence of the founding congregation was stronger. About this time (1965) the congregation was in the process of decentralizing its authority from the mother house (in Canada) to the provincial level. The local Catholic Diocese, which held the mortgage on Alpha College property, also had considerable real and potential influence.

Other important environmental changes were occurring about this time. Two important public institutions, offering tuition-free higher education, opened in the vicinity of Alpha College during the 1960's. The traditional "hold" exerted on Catholic students by Catholic colleges and universities was diminishing. These students felt less compelled to choose Catholic colleges, and increasingly sought college environments with greater personal and intellectual freedom than the Catholic colleges were thought to offer. To some extent, these changed attitudes towards Catholic higher education on the part of students were reflected changes occurring in the Church generally after the renewal efforts of Vatican II. Within religious congregations, including the one which governed Alpha College, priests and nuns were rethinking their own vocations and the missions of orders to which they belonged. Additionally, single sex colleges were generally becoming less attractive.

In 1967, the Regional Accrediting Association placed Alpha College on "show cause" status with intention to review again in two years. It observed in its report that the college had been confronted by substantial changes in its environment, had not adequately responded to those changes, and that in its opinion "Alpha College cannot long successfully continue as a sound four-year college of liberal arts if it simply tries to carry on as it now is."

Those changes included not only the recent establishment of tuition-free public institutions, as mentioned above, but also the opening of a major bridge which considerably reduced the geographic insulation of the area in which the college was located.

In response to the Association's plea for intensive self-study, in 1967 the President appointed a new Academic Dean from the faculty at an ivy-league institution and apparently promised him a free hand in making academic changes and upgrading the faculty and the academic program. This upgrading took the form of recruitment of a number of new faculty members, some with impressive credentials. Others came with doctorates still in progress, suggesting that Alpha College was still, as it had previously been accused of being, a staging ground for completion of graduate work from which a permanent position would be secured. In any event, the new faculty were recruited with the aid of substantially improved salary scales, low teaching loads (typically nine hours), and a general commitment to improved academic standards.

The increased costs necessitated by improved salary schedules, additional staff, lower productivity ratios (involved in lighter loads) led to substantial financial deficits. In 1967 expenditures and transfers exceeded revenues by $41,000, and in the year ending 1968, by $76,000. (The total college budget was somewhat over $500,000 at this point.) These deficits exhausted the fund balance by the year ending 1969 at which point the fund deficit was $180,000. There were deficits of over $200,000 in the years ending 1969 and 1970. At this time commitments were also being made for physical plant expansion in the form of a library and a residence hall. Funds had been sought through federal and state agencies for this construction.

The new academic plans, or at least academic "outlooks," involved an intention to broaden the base of the clientele, which was traditionally local, of moderate academic ability, and pretty much middle class socio-economically. Hopes were to recruit from a fairly wide area geographically, recruit other students, and secure a much broader range of students socio-economically.

Enrollment was increasing, but slowly. As against short run targets of 600 students, and long run targets of 1000 (which was realistic in relation to campus facilities, except for the overcrowded and understocked library), the actual figures did not reach 400, a number at which enrollment had peaked in the early 1960's. The failure to meet enrollment targets, coupled with unwillingness to raise tuition (in the final year of operation, Alpha College's annual tuition was a comparatively low $1300), meant the worsening of the finances of the college, which was heavily tuition-dependent.

The fiscal situation was exacerbated by the psychological effects of opposition within the community to the new academic initiatives which seemed to imply the loss or diminution of the college's traditional Catholic character. The character and personality of the new Dean and the faculty he recruited became issues. They were felt (by many) to be somewhat at odds with the values and beliefs of the college. Nevertheless, there does seem to have been a good deal of support for the program among students, perhaps as much because of the accompanying social freedoms which it brought, as because of its intensified academic and intellectual environment. Thus, the campus was increasingly polarized, with advocates on both sides within the student body, the faculty and the religious community.

External sources of financial aid were not forthcoming. The college had apparently been promised considerable assistance from the congregation's mother house, but the funds were not forthcoming. The reason given was that the purpose for which the funds were to be used had changed. Philanthropic or diocesan-induced grants or loans were not produced.

As the financial crisis grew worse, without any resolution in sight, the President sought remedies by the summary dismissal of four faculty members. This precipitated, in the fall of 1969, the mass resignation of over half the faculty, and increased the growing alienation between the President and the Dean whom she had recruited. The latter felt it necessary to maintain the attractive teaching loads which were proving costly, the wisdom and feasibility of which has been questioned by the Accreditation Association's revisitation earlier that year. (Ironically, and in support of his position, that visit in February, 1969, had resulted in reinstatement of the college's accreditation.)

At impasse, the President sought immediate relief of her responsibilities. At this point the Catholic Diocese, concerned to preserve the availability of Catholic higher education for students in the community, intervened and helped to arrange the appointment as Acting President, of a local layman of stature in both the higher education community and the Catholic Church, who agreed to spend six months assessing the situation.

The Acting President, who took office in January of 1970, saw immediately that the crisis was irreversible, and while he secured short-term loans with the assistance of the Diocese (as consignatory), recommended the closing of the college as the only feasible alternative to its semi-permanent status as a ward of the Diocese. He announced in February, 1970, the planned closing of the college, and that the current junior class would be allowed to continue to completion of their degrees the following year (June, 1971), with all other students encouraged to seek arrangements with the assistance of the college. It does not appear that this assistance was forthcoming, either from Alpha College, or from other local colleges who may have been easily able to absorb the orphaned students. Nor does it appear that much assistance was given by the college to faculty members now seeking to find new positions.

About the time the Acting President left--June 1970 by prior agreement--conversations were begun with Omega University regarding the possibility of merger, or more properly, consolidation. The University formally approached state authorities in the fall, and by January of 1971 the state and the trustees of both institutions had approved a consolidation. Omega University at about this time had been faced with the need of phasing out a campus which it operated in another section of the metropolitan area, but which served a good many students from roughly the same geographic area as Alpha College. The consolidation with Alpha College gave it the opportunity to continue operation in that general area, absorb many of the students whom it had been serving at the nearby campus, and pick up a relatively valuable physical plant by assuming what at this time had become about $1,000,000 of accumulated debt.

Alpha College's final graduates received degrees in June, 1971. By arrangement, about half received the last awarded Alpha College degrees, and the other half chose to be awarded their degrees from Omega University. That fall, operations were continued as a constituent unit of Omega University. Extensive remodeling (costing about $2,000,000) had been done and plans were completed to construct the library for which Alpha College had already begun negotiating loans.

The present operation of Alpha College-Omega University appears quite successful. There are somewhat over 1,000 students enrolled in a variety of programs, both liberal arts and career-oriented. Nearly half the students are enrolled in Business Administration and Education programs, and there has been vigorous development of new career-oriented programs such as Transportation, Commercial Photography and Criminal Justice. Like the parent institution, Alpha College is coeducational, about 60 percent of its students are male, 40 percent female. Omega University also offers part-time graduate work at Alpha College, staffed from the main campus. The resident faculty numbers about 31. Its current operations are said to be in the black, though the surplus revenues are not sufficient yet to have paid off both accumulated deficit and the new investment in physical plant improvement and renovation.

Not far beneath the surface of these historical events and facts lies a complex and dynamic set of forces which were at work on Alpha College during the second half of the decade of the 'sixties.

First, the Accrediting Association's judgment that Alpha College had prepared inadequately for change appears to have been correct. The thirty-year presidency of its founder was remarkable in its vigor and purpose, but during the close of that period (1965) changes in the immediate environment of the college had been inadequately accomodated. These changes included the enlarged competitive potential of local public and tuition-free higher education, the diminished attractiveness of both single-sex and Catholic colleges, the incipient increase in demand for more vocationally oriented programs, and the decreased geographic isolation of the Alpha College geographic area. Internal changes were equally important, and equally inadequately confronted. The attitudes of the religious community towards its own mission were changing, or at least being re-examined. Any substantial departure of nuns from the teaching or administrative staff to leave the college or the order meant replacement by more highly paid laypersons. Aside from that, the faculty appears to have been much too small; some "majors" (as the Accrediting Association's report notes) were serviced by no full time faculty members. In 1961 the faculty of 26 persons included seven Ph.D.'s (three of which were held by members of the religious order). The booming demand for elementary and secondary teachers, which had made it possible for graduates of Alpha College's unaccredited Teacher Education Program to secure positions in the metropolitan area, would clearly not last forever. The college's traditional policies regarding student conduct were discordant in the post-Berkeley student world even at a small Catholic women's college.

Secondly, the changes brought about by the new President seemed to rest largely on the abilities of a single person, the new Dean she recruited in 1967. There does not seem to have been a carefully conceived academic plan or philosophy, let alone one which had been hammered out with a good deal of participation from the entire college community. The new academic initiatives seemed "ivy league" in their predilections. It seems at least possible that neither the socio-political environment of a middle class and conservative community, and clientele, nor the limited resources available to a college with low tuition and no endowment, could sustain the demands of "ivy league" educational activity. (The price tag for these initiatives was considerable for a small college and seems not to have been looked at in the light of its cumulative costs several years hence.) More than that, the implications of a broader, less-parochial and freer intellectual environment were misread, intentionally or unintentionally. The emerging program, with diminished focus upon required philosopy and theology, and a more laissez-faire attitude towards social conduct were seen as hostile threats to the broader cultural religious and personal values which--to many--the college represented.

It is clear that the pace and depth of change eventually left a good many behind: faculty, members of the religious community and students. The initial receptiveness to change, if indeed it was there, was not accompanied by planning, communication, and shared decision-making. It is possible that the newly recruited staff, including the Dean appeared (intentionally or not) to oppose and perhaps to slight for the traditional character of the college and those who ran it, so that the hostilities were thereby intensified. The resulting rifts and scars were deep, bitter, and in some cases, permanent.

Fourth, the role of the Archdiocese is important but not entirely clear. The Bishop was concerned to maintain a "Catholic higher education presence" in the area served by Alpha College. While he may not have been enthusiastic about the academic course being pursued by the college (since it would have been easy to interpret that course as involving a weakening of its traditional religious commitment), his office did make inquiries to a number of larger and healthier Catholic institutions regarding major possibilities. It is clear (at least in retrospect) that Omega University had more to gain from the consolidation than other institutions: a physical plant and location to replace one they were being forced to relinquish.

What, then, were the possible causes for the demise of Alpha College? The following factors appear to be implicit in the above discussion.

1. Enrollment, the overwhelmingly main source of revenue for the college, was unstable. By the late sixties, the environmental conditions affecting student recruitment had changed significantly: the area's isolation had diminished; students' college "tastes" had changed in relation to Catholic colleges, single-sex institutions, and liberal arts programs. It seems likely that neither the location of the college (in a major metropolitan area, but not in its heart, as N. Y. U. or Boston University is) nor its program were sufficient to attract large numbers of resident students, so that the change in the predominantly commuter image was probably a mistake.

2. Finances. Money was never abundant for Alpha College; its low tuition may have assured accessibility for middle class young women, but it also assured (in the absence of an endowment) a rather continuous fiscal precariousness. The new academic initiatives upset that precariousness. The richer mix of higher faculty salaries and lower work loads which was meant to purchase higher quality was incompatible with low tuition policies. Increased enrollments may have alleviated this situation, but they did not materialize. The college had established no solid base of philanthropic support. Its trustees had not played this role, and little progress was being made in the direction of getting them to, or eliciting the support of other groups who could. The willingness of the congregation (and perhaps the diocese) to assist financially seemed cooled considerably by the liberal turn in academic

philosophy and religious commitment.

There are two aspects of the fiscal situation which bear some elaboration. First, the congregation's potential support was not only from the mother house but also from the local community. It was a fact of life for Catholic colleges in the sixties (and still is) that, as their faculty size grew, or membership in the religious community shrank (or both), the income represented by the contributed services of the religious community diminished in proportion to its overall budget (and, sometimes, in absolute dollars). At Alpha College, as the college's expenditures were increasing 40 percent (from $613,794 to $859,955) between 1967 and 1970, the size of its contributed services was diminishing 29 percent (from $116,393 to $82,436) as a result of the reduction, proportionally and in absolute numbers, in the representation of the religious community in the faculty and staff positions. (Contributed services represent the difference between the actual expense for the support of the religious community and their aggregate income earned from the positions they occupy.)

Secondly, the amount of external support for financial aid was not great at this point. Both federal and state programs were much smaller than they were to become in the mid-sixties, so that even in the year ending 1970, the college spent only $78,000 on student aid. Figures are not available on numbers of students aided, but they must have been small--around 25 percent. Even of this small amount, only $18,000 or 24 percent was covered by external funds for that purpose. Thus, of $545,651 student tuition revenue, about $59,000 or 11 percent is unfunded student aid.

3. Governance and management. The role of the trustees was woefully

inadequate. Traditionally a rubber stamp for an authoritarian administration, the board seemed unable in the last few years of Alpha College's operation to rally itself to provide support, advice, or decisive judgment. To the contrary, it appears that the board may have led the students to believe that their fund-raising efforts, in the months before closing, may have been efficacious in keeping the doors open. In the final year of operation, the board was expanded somewhat, and it seems possible that this expansion may have strengthened the voice of the Archdiocese in the final disposition of the college and its physical plant.

The institution's own administrative team seems to have been inadequate. The long regime of the foundress had apparently prevented the development of a strong second-level management group. The good intentions and progressive vision of the new President were apparently offset by her own lack of administrative skill. Once the fiscal picture was clear, she was unable to obtain cooperation from the Dean to effect some economies in the academic operation; furthermore, she failed to secure external support or to motivate the trustees to do so.

4. The new Dean and the Faculty he had recruited to implement the new academic directions seem to have been unwilling to negotiate more modest expectations or a more realistic timetable for the realization of their hopes. Nor does their vision, in retrospect, seem realistic for an institution with limited visibility, limited resources, and a traditional clientele with limited intellectual aspirations. To pursue improved academic quality squarely within the tradition of mainstream Catholicism may have been a more realistic and potentially viable course

5. Planning. There appear to have been no long range plans for

the institution, developed before or after 1965, which were participatory in their development, realistic in their design, and mindful of the traditions and environment of the college. It is a cliche to say that colleges founder because they do not plan. Like many cliches, it seems true.

Substantiation for the above factors may be found in the present vigorous, and apparently successful, operation of Alpha College-Omega University. The program is varied. The religious objectives of the college are clear and effected partly through academic requirements. (It is interesting to note that about 95 percent of the students are Roman Catholic. There are almost no minority students.) The full-time faculty is no larger than Alpha College's was, though the percent of Ph.D.'s is much higher. The present enrollment is over 1,000, and most of the students who enrolled in fall 1971 transferred from the original Omega University campus. Omega University makes extensive use of adjunct faculty and main campus faculty to staff the offerings at Alpha College campus. Omega University also had access to its own substantial resources--fiscal and managerial--as well as to the external funding sources of loans and grants which a large university is able to command. While the liberal arts programs are still available, a large percentage of students major in programs with career orientation which were not available at Alpha College (except, of course, for teacher preparation). It is ironic in this regard to note that the actual number of women students attending Alpha College-Omega University and majoring in subjects offered by the former Alpha College appears actually to be smaller than the Alpha

College enrollment was in its final years!

Nevertheless, careful fiscal and program planning, efficient use of resources, ability to make substantial investment, varied offerings in a co-ed setting, and program design suited to a commuter clientele from a middle class background, educationally and religiously conservative, seem to have brought about success to replace previous failure.

Beta College: Did it Close?

Thomas C. Hunt

Beta College: Did it Close?

Beta College* is located about ten miles outside of a major United States city. It was founded in the late nineteenth century, the first standard liberal arts college for women in the area. Originally it was owned and operated by a Catholic order of women. Several years before its closing (and immediate change of mission) the Order turned its operation over to a board composed of nuns and lay persons. On March 27, 1974, this Board voted to close the college, effective August 31, 1974. The Board turned the college back to the order of nuns, who immediately reopened it as a Continuing Education Center, a title under which it currently functions.

Eighty-five private colleges have closed since 1970. A number of reasons have been advanced for their closing. This paper will attempt to look at and describe the forces which contributed to the demise of Beta College as a traditional liberal arts college.

Declining enrollment was one contributing factor. Beta College enrolled 608 in September of 1962, 815 in the fall of 1966, and declined to 440 by fall of 1973. The class expected to enter in autumn of 1974 was very small. Spiralling costs due to inflation, coupled with the declining enrollment, were another factor. Commenting on the financial picture, the Business Manager stated that the college had lost approximately $750,000 in the last five or six years of its operation, and that a loss between $500,000 and $750,000 was projected over the next three years (1974-1977). One Board member said that it was not fair to expect the Province of the Order to continue to absorb such losses. Accordingly, the Board reluctantly voted unanimously to close Beta College.

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*The minutes of the Board of Trustees, identified as important by one Board member, were not released to the author. This report is written with that limitation.

A close scrutiny of the financial picture, using available statistics, partially identifies where the debit came from, at least between 1970-73. (See table III.1)

Table III.1

Operating Revenues and Expenditures for Beta College by Year

Category	Revenue in Dollars	Expenditure in Dollars	
Fiscal Year 1971			
Educational and General	1,105,859	1,049,894	
Auxiliary Enterprises	445,363	348,175	
Student Aid Grants	45,563	152,259	
Totals for 1971	1,569,785	1,550,328	(+46,457)
Fiscal Year 1972			
Educational and General	1,349,739	1,100,667	
Auxiliary Enterprises	354,654	305,611	
Student Aid Grants	57,050	155,299	
Totals for 1972	1,761,443	1,561,577	(+199,866)
Fiscal Year 1973			
Educational and General	1,172,410	1,159,913	
Auxiliary Enterprises	354,464	285,962	
Student Aid Grants	51,097	155,158	
Totals for 1973	1,577,971	1,601,033	(-23,062)

Looking at operating expenses, the College was in the black in 1970-71 and 1971-72, but lost $23,062 in 1972-73. The declining enrollment would have increased the expected loss.

Since the statement of the debt status of Beta College was not able to be located, the exact amount of indebtedness cannot be pinpointed. Beta College had erected several major buildings in the 1960s. It was in debt to HUD, and was having trouble meeting its financial obligations. The College's lay President (from 1970-73) reported that it had defaulted on a large "balloon" payment to an insurance company in 1968 or 1969, and was required to pay an interest rate as high as 10 percent as a consequence. The former President also stated that sufficient funds for this payment were available in the mid-sixties, but this money was used to help build the new library, erected about 1965.

There may have been over-building, but part of this is hindsight. An outside consulting firm, engaged by the college in the late 1960s, did not charge it with overbuilding. Large sums of federal money became available to private, religious colleges for the first time in the 1960s. Higher education was booming; larger enrollments were predicted. Most of this increase, however, occurred in the public sector (especially in the two-year community colleges), not in the private sector. Beta College was affected adversely by this phenomenon.

The decreasing enrollment was related to the declining attractiveness of religious, private, liberal arts colleges. The college's recruiters were having a difficult time selling the "uniqueness" of

Beta College to young women of the 1960s. The former lay President estimated that the attrition rate of the freshman class was almost 25 percent. He speculated that one reason for this was that the reality of the "uniqueness" did not measure up to its forecast. A number of the students were daughters of alumnae. However, the pride in being an alumna of a special kind of women's college no longer was the attraction for some young female Catholics as it once had been.

The effects of a very important factor, the social forces operant in the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council, were evident in several ways in the travails of Beta College. First, there was the desire for a more activist, world-oriented mission on the part of many clerics and religious. Women religious began to look for more social apostolates, or missions, seeking to go out to people, rather than to have people come to them. Obviously, conducting private colleges for girls fell in this latter category. The order which operated Beta College was no exception to this trend. In 1973 the Sisters set up 31 small groups to discuss their apostolate. Twenty-six of these groups recommended that Beta College change its mission, that it become a Center for Christian Experience. A common description of these reports of these groups reads as follows:

> That Beta College become a center of Christian experiences which lead to the fuller development of the human person in the following ways: a religious education center, an educational leadership center, a Christian cultural center, and that its services be mobile, flexible, and outreaching to the adult community.

Whether or not this change in mission was caused, or even occasioned, by the bleak financial picture is uncertain. The former lay President also attested to the existence of this feeling within the Order, saying that some members of the Order serving in other areas, educational or otherwise, were opposed to contributing to the continuation of what some of them felt was an outdated (and perhaps financially doomed) mission. Whatever the cause or extent, there was some of this sentiment in the Order; it was expressed; and eventually followed. The Priest-President of a nearby university, in commenting upon the effect of Vatican II, observed that this kind of action was not limited to Beta College. He felt that in the years which followed Vatican II, many orders of religious women become introspective, looking at their communities rather than at their apostolates in seeking their mission and Christian service.

Their was also strife within the Order. Some of this was related to age and position of power, some (not unrelated to the foregoing) was of a liberal versus conservative nature. This contention was reflected in the change of mission. The social activism of the late 1960s and early 1970s, which involved civil and religious matters, did not leave Beta College (or its order of nuns) unscathed.

The College's declining enrollment, bleak financial outlook, and the impact of Vatican II were all manifested in another statistic--the declining number of religious women in the Order in general and in preparation in particular. The former lay President stated that in the mid-1960s more than 200 of Beta College's students were religious women from either the Order which operated the college, or from two nearby Orders which had no college of their own. In the early 1970s this number had lessened to about 50, with only one such student enrolled as a freshman in 1970-71.

Beta College was also caught up in the conflict which sometimes occurs between academic and pastoral circles in the Catholic Church. The College's and the Order's relations with the local Bishop, who was quite conservative, were not cordial; nor was the college on friendly terms with the local Catholic pastor. There was also occasional contention between priest-chaplains at the College and the Sisters.

The above troubles reflect ideological differences. These were also in evidence in the conflict which was generated over the theology taught by a liberal nun. There was grumbling over the failure of some of the nuns to wear the traditional religious habit, and over other related activities, which heretofore were not done by nuns. Student life policies, such as dormitory rules, were liberalized. Actions such as these were not met with universal acclaim. Catholic parents, who sent their daughters at considerable expense to a private college for women conducted by nuns with the expectation that they would be protected there, were not pleased by "new" theology teaching and liberalized dormitory rules.

As is sometimes the case with private religious institutions such as Beta College, there was isolation from the local civic community, as well as from the local religious parish. One citizen, now a member of the Board of the Continuing Education Center, estimated that at least 80 percent of the population of the suburbs in which Beta College was located, had never been on its campus. Some residents had their children take private music lessons on campus because the college was known for its art and music programs but, in general, there was very little local support to maintain the college.

Disagreement exists over whether the college "lowered" its standards to combat the declining enrollment. Some say what reduction occurred was no more than what also occurred at other private and public institutions of higher learning during this "boom" period of burgeoning enrollments. Recruiting efforts were stepped up, including one trip to Hong Kong to gain students. The competition for students, the social trends, the cost and the increasingly more difficult to define "uniqueness" of the type of education offered by Beta College made the task of recruiters more difficult.

Should (could) Beta College have changed its curriculum, gone co-educational, etc.? The college considered these options, only to find them unpromising. The college's strengths, and those of the religious personnel who worked at low cost, were in the humanities. It had no facilities for an expanded science program; it had no or few religious personnel to teach business, pre-engineering, science or mathematics. These considerations, supplemented by the tradition of a girls' college and the presence of nearby co-educational institutions available at a much lower cost, vetoed any move toward co-education. They also deterred adjustments in the curriculum.

Several years before its closing the Order which had owned and operated Beta College from its inception turned the college over to a Board of Trustees composed of nuns and lay persons. This Board hired a lay President, giving him a term from July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1973. The lay President claims he was not allowed to complete his term, being asked by the Board President over the telephone on November 19, 1972 for his resignation. He states no specific reasons were given for this action except that he wasn't effective in working with the nuns. He was paid until June 30, the end of his three-year contract. Whatever the actual facts, there was, undoubtedly, a general lack of harmony among the college's administrative leadership. One former college official cited as the main factor in the closing of Beta College the low caliber of leadership in its last year. There were instances of individual administrators and faculty members consulting with individual members of the Board of Trustees.

The former lay President was one person pointed to as contributing to the lack of a successful administrative leadership term. He is now an Academic Vice-President of a private college, and he asserted that the Beta College changed its outward form when he was chosen as President but not its goals. He related a number of anecedotes in support of this contention. In a variety of circumstances, members of the religious Order continued to hold a proprietary attitude towards Beta College, referring to it as "our college," when discussing administrative affairs and potential policy changes. At one point the lay President attempted to rent a closed dormitory at Beta College to a nearby college which needed dormitory space for 22 male students. Despite Beta College's financial predicament, he alleges that his recommendation was denied by the Board because of the influence of the Sisters. He maintains that these religious women perceived the college mainly in terms of what was good for the Order. In private, religious colleges operated by nuns, at least as far as Beta College was concerned, he asserted that "everything is done differently."

During the late spring or early summer of 1972, the Order asked permission to negotiate directly with the Board over the clause which dealt with the property of the college. The clause was changed so that the property reverted back to the Order in the event the college closed.

The Board, without the involvement of all of its members, appointed a nun President to succeed the lay President. She was in office when the Board voted on March 27, 1974, to cease operation on August 31 of that year.

The decision to close Beta College was a painful one. Yet, all persons spoken to who were connected with the college at that time, regardless of the degree of their commitment to the college, viewed it as the only possible action, given the set of circumstances which existed at that time. The college immediately was reopened as a Continuing Education Center. It rented some of its buildings to social agencies of the county in which it is located, and is attempting to implement what the majority of the members of the religious Order expressed they wanted in 1973. So, while Beta College may be said to have closed in one sense, in another real sense it is alive today.

Why Gamma University Closed:

Some Suppositions

Lois Beeken

Why Gamma University Closed:

Some Suppositions

In 1947, shortly after the end of World War II, a Baptist General Convention in the Southwestern United States established Gamma University. Like many other small, private, liberal arts colleges in the nation, the University faced a number of problems in the 1960's which ultimately caused its closure in 1973: a small enrollment base, increasing costs, and competition from public-supported institutions. Subsequent to closing, the campus was given to the state for use as a campus for Psi University. The purpose of this report is to describe the historical role of Gamma University in higher education and to identify some of the possible factors that led to its closure in 1973.

Gamma University was founded on an island which was previously a naval facility made available by the General Services Administration in 1947 after World War II. In order to enable the Baptists to move the college to this location, the city in which the naval facility was located gave up its first option to the property. Since the Baptist General Convention could not enter into a contract with the federal government due to its position regarding separation of church and state, the property was deeded by the government to the Board of Trustees on a 20-year amortization-by-use plan.

Although the University realized a period of growth between 1947 and 1968, it experienced difficulties in initiating a viable program. In the initial development of its academic program, the institution sought to establish a number of specialized degree programs. For example, in 1947, oil was a major industry in the area: Therefore, the college offered a degree program in petroleum engineering. By 1957 the oil industry had declined in that area so that there was little demand for this specialized program. Other programs offered at first were in agriculture and nursing, but as expected enrollment levels never materialized in these specialized programs, the institution found itself over-extended, and by 1960 all of these offerings had been eliminated.

Prior to 1965 the college had been dealing with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in an effort to receive accreditation, but was unable to meet the requirements. In addition to a number of programs that were too expensive, the college had a costly football program the President was reluctant to abandon. Also the Association required a minimum number of buildings which the University did not possess at that time. Within two years after the installation of a new President, the college was able to meet the requirements, but only after a thorough analysis of the academic and fiscal operation. An efficiency program was initiated and by reducing curricula, reducing the number of faculty members, by making changes in certain programs, and eliminating the football program, the college was able to meet accreditation requirements. However, the efficiency program had its undesirable effects too.

Following the cuts in programs and in the number of faculty members, it was not possible to make further reductions without jeopardizing college accreditation. Also the state educational agency, responsible for the certification of teachers, withdrew approval of five programs which did not appear to be adequately supported. For example, for certification in certain programs such as chemistry, state required more faculty members and students than the reduced core curriculum allowed.

In its attempt to operate more efficiently, the college made a revision in the entire scholarship program. After analyzing the scholarship program, the administration decided that it was being discriminatory in giving the bulk of its aid to Baptist students. The shift in the student aid policy resulted in a reduction of Baptist students who wished to attend the college. Many Baptist students, children of Baptist ministers, and students entering religious vocations had been dependent upon financial support from the college.

As the years passed, the mission of the college changed. In 1947 the primary mission of the college was to make Baptist denominational education available to students in the region, but in attempting to do so, the University found itself in a unique situation. In the area, 60 percent of the inhabitants were Mexican Americans many of whom were Roman Catholic. The prospect of Protestant denominational education obviously did not appeal to them.

Since there was little response from the students in the immediate area, in the mid 60's recruitment efforts were shifted to out-of-state prospects, particularly in the states of New York, New Jersey, and Illinois. The mission of the college subsequently changed as a result of this effort, for there was little attempt to emphasize the religious program in the recruitment of students. While the majority of the first student body were Baptists and about 40 percent enrolled in a program designed to prepare them for a vocation in religious service, at the closing, the majority of the students were non-Baptists and many of them were Roman Catholic. It is interesting that this campus, in an effort to provide for the needs of its changing student body, provided as one of its student services the celebration of Mass for its Roman Catholic constituency.

The shift in religious affiliation characterized not only the students but also the faculty. By the time the college closed, the faculty was recruited no longer by Baptist preference, so that there were people with varied religious affiliations including Roman Catholics and Jews. The shift in recruitment policy resulted in a new ecumenical environment on the campus.

A further indication of change in mission is the relaxed requirements in religious training. When the college first opened, students had to enroll in at least three hours of instruction in the Old Testament and three hours in the New Testament. Over the years this requirement was relaxed so that upon closing the stipulation was only that students enroll for three hours credit in a non-specified course dealing with religious philosophy.

As the student enrollment picture changed, many Baptists became concerned about their college, and its role in religious education. As they observed an enrollment of more non-Baptists than Baptists, they became concerned about the continuing educational ministry of the University. Clearly, the college's style of operation and local policy and purpose differed greatly from the original purpose of its founding.

The University also found it difficult to respond to competitive pressure from other colleges in the area. Chi College was perhaps the greatest competitor. This two-year district-controlled public institution had been in existence longer than the University, and in 1966 had 3,760 full-time students enrolled in the academic program.

Gamma University enrolled 634 full-time students that year. In 1966, the approximate cost to a student attending Chi College taking 30 semester hours of credit was $270 while at Gamma University the cost for tuition and fees was $600. Chi College, like the University, offered a two-year liberal arts program. In addition, it offered technical and pre-professional education.

Other Baptist colleges also provided competition. Upsilon College was chartered in 1960. In 1969 its enrollment was 1,442 while the enrollment at Gamma University had dropped from 675 in 1968 to 613 in 1969. The Upsilon College drew 96 percent of its entering freshmen from within the state, yet Gamma University drew only 66 percent of its freshmen from the state.

Historically, the University had only a marginal financial existence. A study of private higher education in the state revealed the following data which related directly to the situation at Gamma University:

1. Educational costs at independent accredited private senior colleges and universities have risen 14.3 percent since 1967-68. Educational and general portions of total budget have increased 15.9 percent in that period.

2. Costs per student in these institutions have increased from $1,786 in 1967-68 to $1,992 in 1969-70, an increase of 11.5 percent over the two-year period.

3. Average tuition at state independent senior colleges has been increased from $840 in 1967-68 to $1,111 in 1969-70, an increase of 32 percent. This contrasts sharply with the situation at public senior colleges, where tuition has remained stable at $100 since 1967.

4. Nineteen of the 28 independent accredited senior colleges and universities in the state will have deficits totaling an estimated $5 million at the end of the academic year. This represents more than a 100 percent increase in total amount of deficits over the last two years. Institutions

which reported balances or surpluses two years ago now have deficits or are nearing that point. Surpluses for private sector institutions dropped 400 percent during that period to a total of less than $500,000

5. Private sector enrollment as a percentage of higher education enrollment in the state has continued a steady decline--20.2 percent in 1967-68, 19.4 percent in 1968-69, and 18.6 percent in 1969-70. During this period, actual numbers of students enrolled in the private sector have increased slightly--from 48.[illegible]43 in 1967 to 50,498 in 1969-70.

6. The number of independent sector students receiving financial aid has increased 19.7 percent over the last two years. Total amount of such aid increased about $6 million over this period, with institutional funds representing the largest single source of such assistance. Total financial aid in the independent sector averages $278 per student enrolled.

These data relate directly to Gamma University in the areas of finances and enrollment. In 1969, as a result of a drop in enrollment, a drop in gifts and grants income, and a steady increase in expenditures due to inflation, the college ran a deficit of $149,574. In 1970 an analysis of the financial status shows that the situation was even worse. Student aid expenditures were $45,000 more than student aid revenues, and general and educational expenditures were $91,986 more than total educational revenues so that there was a net reduction of $276,031 of operating reserves. Of the total revenues of $1,236,901, only $32,548 represented endowment income.

As a result of a growing financial dilemma, several consultants were called in over a period of years to study the problems of the University especially as it related to the community. All recommended a similar course of action.

One Baptist higher education official recommended in 1966 that the Board of Trustees be given independent status to chart the course of the college to enable it to become a more vital part of the city in which it was located. Another consultant who was also a college president, visited the city. He found a lack of concern on the part of those interviewed for a Baptist college, and he too recommended that the Board of Trustees become an independent body with local non-Baptist representation. The consultants felt that this change in the governing body would mean a relaxing of the stringent requirements of the college and make it more community oriented. Also, with an opportunity for a voice in the governance of the institution, local donors would be more willing to contribute to its support.

While plans were under consideration for a change in the status of the Board of Trustees at the University, other plans were in the making which ultimately caused the college to phase out its operation entirely. In 1965 the State Coordinating Board recommended the addition of five or six additional state universities. The city in which Gamma University was located was considered for the site of an upper level division with a graduate school, and, when the legislature met in 1969, a bill was introduced to create that university in that city. The bill did not pass in that year, but in 1971, another bill was introduced and that one did pass. The bill provided that the university to be located in that city would be a branch of the Psi University system.

During that period in which they city was being considered as a site for one of the proposed universities, a committee was formed in the city to study the proposal and to seek support for such a move. Many citizens felt that their city needed a major university because Gamma University was not providing educational opportunities for a large proportion of the citizenry. Many donors as well as potential donors to the financial existence of the University began to contribute funds to sponsor legislation to create the new public college.

Another blow was dealt to Gamma University which added to its growing problems: a major hurricane hit in August, 1970. Many of the buildings on the campus were damaged, library books were destroyed and the administration saw the possibility of turning away students in the fall if funds could not be secured immediately for the repair of the college's facilities. With no emergency funds to fall back on, the Board of Trustees sought aid from the Baptist General Convention. They too were without resources for relief of this nature, but in an effort to help, they gave the college $1500. However, in order to get workmen to begin immediately to set the campus in order for the students scheduled to arrive within a matter of weeks, the Board of Trustees had to have a line of credit. For this reason, they asked for and received a Small Business Loan of $500,000 from the federal government. Damage was repaired and the college opened for business on the regularly scheduled date.

In response to the move by the Board of Trustees to secure federal aid, the state Baptist General Convention voiced its disapproval. Because the Convention saw the receipt of a federal disaster relief loan a threat to separation of church and state, they became concerned to the point that they told the Board to "find private resources for financing its hurricane repairs, or to withdraw from the Convention."

Meanwhile, it became obvious that the upper level division of Psi University would eventually be located in the city. The city was obligated to provide a campus in order to get the Psi University branch, so the officials of Gamma University decided to offer their campus to the state for the location of that institution. However, the state rejected the offer because it could not accept the college's debt which was at that time $1.5 million. The townspeople then decided to vote a bond issue to pay the debt and to acquire the campus which subsequently they gave to the state. Gamma University closed its operation in 1973.

Recognizing that Gamma University had a well-developed curriculum with a well-qualified administration and faculty, the Board of Trustees of Psi University in the new location phased the Gamma University curriculum, administration and faculty into the new institution, although the new institution began its operation with a new president and administration.

SUMMARY

In a review of the history of the college it appears that the following factors ultimately led to its closure:

1. From the beginning the University was marginally funded.
2. In the original founding the purpose emphasized Baptist denominational education, yet the college was located in a predominately Roman Catholic setting (i.e., only five percent Baptists).
3. The college had to compete with eight other Baptist colleges in the state for both students and funds.
4. Two public institutions, Psi University and Chi College, were able to compete for students more effectively because of low tuition rates which were approximately one-half that of Gamma University.

Despite its difficulties, the college was able to revitalize itself in 1965 by reducing course offerings, eliminating or restructuring expensive programs, and implementing a vigorous, more open recruitment of out-of-state students. This revitalization program moved the college quite far from the original program which placed emphasis on preparing people for religious service and may have alienated its basic or potential Baptist donors. Nevertheless, the efforts paid off in increased enrollment and accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

At the same time the college was not able to build a significant endowment, and the reduction of courses in the streamline efforts for the sake of efficiency cost the withdrawal of approval of certain programs by the state education agency.

To meet the cost of the damage from the hurricane, the college borrowed money from the Small Business Administration in order to open after the hurricane badly damaged the campus.

Even with all of its difficulties, the college might have continued to eke out an existence if there had not been an increasing demand by local citizens for a public university in the city in which Gamma University was located. The residents of the area actively sought the establishment of a state university which they felt would greatly enhance educational opportunities in the region, particularly for students who could not afford tuition at a private college.

Delta College: A Community Effort That Failed

Marybelle C. Rockey

Delta College: A Community Effort That Failed

This report is based on information contained in the 1969-1970 Delta College Bulletin, on newspaper accounts in the local newspaper from September, 1967, to July, 1974, and on six interviews conducted with former employees and board members of the College. Unfortunately, it was not possible to schedule an interview with the former college president an the information in this report is, of necessity, incomplete.

Delta College was founded by a group of concerned local citizens and was incorporated on February 12, 1965. The first students matriculated in October, 1965, and the first classes were held on October 11, 1965. The three principles which guided the founding and development of Delta College were:

(1) That there is a need for collegiate institutions of excellence in a free society.

(2) That excellence in education can be achieved by an institution created to operate efficiently and economically.

(3) That the average high school graduate as well as the above average graduate deserves a chance for a college education.

Delta College was a residential college with a four-year liberal arts curriculum. The college had an "open-door" admissions policy and was known as a second chance college. In other words, students who had experienced difficulties at other colleges were welcome at Delta College.

Delta College employed from eight to ten recruiters who were located in the large metropolitan areas of the Midwest to the East coast. Consequently, most Delta College students were from the state in which the college was located or from the states of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Illinois, and Ohio. Chartered flights brought students from New York City after vacations. During one term for which records were available, thirty-four states, the District of Columbia, and eight foreign countries were listed as the home addresses of the enrolled students.

Most students were average college age (18-21). During the early years of Delta College, men comprised 70 percent of the student body, but by 1970, only 50 percent of the students were men. Most students came from the middle or lower-middle socio-economic strata of the population, although forty or fifty students were reported to be from very wealthy families.

Enrollment fluctuated considerably from year to year, but during the peak year, 1968-1969, 1570 students were enrolled.

Former college personnel recalled that there was steady upgrading in the qualifications of students between the opening and closing year. It was also the opinion of several interviewees that many of the male students were attending college to avoid the draft.

The Delta College faculty appeared to be well qualified. All professors and department chairmen held the Ed.D. or the Ph.D. and all assistant professors and instructors held at least a master's degree. Faculty were recruited from all over the country and their educational experiences as listed in the college bulletin were impressive.

The interviewees characterized the faculty as teaching Ph.D.'s rather than research and publication oriented Ph.D.'s. Faculty were described as dedicated and student oriented and many routinely opened their homes to students.

A former faculty member who was interviewed commented that the class and advisement responsibilities were "tough", but that there were financial and personal rewards for the heavy load. He reported that the teaching at Delta College was creative and in his opinion was outstanding.

Delta College was fully in support of a program of individual help for students. Tutors with Bachelor's degrees conducted tutorial session and extra discussion meetings for students needing special assistance.

Delta College offered a full academic program in humanities, communications arts, social sciences, natural sciences, business administration and education. Students were assigned to the Division of General Liberal Arts for their first two years and to the Upper Division during their junior and senior years of college. All students were required to take courses in the four liberal arts areas for the first two years. Interdisciplinary capabilities existed between the departments and team teaching was a common practice.

The administrators appeared to be qualified with both degrees and experience in higher education. Interviewees reported that there were no particular administrative problems, such as collective bargaining or tenure, and that there was not a rapid turnover in the administration. There was a policy and procedures manual of sorts, and decisions were reportedly made by committees. The President was away from campus speaking and promoting a good bit, but during his absences the college was run by the vice-presidents.

Delta College had an all new 275-acre residential campus which commanded a magnificent view of a local historic monument. Twelve modernistic buildings had been completed, including a library-classroom complex, a science building, a student activity center, seven residence halls and two dining halls. Plans had also been drawn for several additional buildings to complete the thirty million dollar campus.

Delta College was funded by the monies generated from student tuition, fees, room and board and by donations from the local business community. A professional fund raising concern was utilized for several of the campaigns. There were no endowments.

Several of the interviewees felt that budgeting procedures were adequate and that there was good control of purchases. Other interviewees expressed the opinion that considerable money could have been saved and that financial matters were too secretive.

Delta College had completed several steps toward accreditation. The status report to the North Central Association was accepted in 1967. However, the college lost its accreditation candidacy in April, 1971.

The Delta College President submitted his resignation on July 3, 1969, and the local newspaper headline on July 9, 1969, announced that the college was not closing. Rumors continued about Delta College, however, and the student enrollment began to drop. In December, 1970, the students and faculty were told that the college was in serious financial difficulty. Only $33,000 was available to meet the monthly payroll of $110,000. Athletics were dropped; the number of recruiters was cut from eleven to three; sixteen faculty were terminated; five departments were merged into two; and the term was cut short.

After the Christmas break, 686 students returned to Delta College for its last semester of operation. The college closed its doors on August 14, 1971.

The financial picture began to unfold. The college had been operating under Chapter XI of the Federal Bankruptcy Act since December, 1970. This allowed the college to continue and restrained creditors from attempting to collect indebtedness prior to that date. It was learned that $750,000 was owed in open trade accounts, $225,000 in bank notes, $4,300,000 indebtedness on the residence halls, $230,000 in land bonds, $620,000 to the federal government on the library, and $230,000 notes due businessmen.

The college was declared bankrupt on December 23, 1971. On July 20, 1972, all of the college's personal property and equipment was placed on the auction block and the auction was held on August 10 and 11, 1972. Six hundred registered buyers attended, as well as the camera crews of CBS and NBC. $197,000 was raised.

All of the interviewees expressed distress over the closing of Delta College. They felt a great personal as well as a community loss.

All felt that the college had overbuilt and that it should have begun more conservatively. One said, "We tried to grow too fast." Others cited overspending as a factor. Several commented that the President did not take advice well and that he was unable to delegate responsibilities. Naivete in financial matters was also mentioned. The question was asked, "How can you support a college with only student dollars and contributions from the community?"

Several felt that the drop in enrollment and the end of the draft could not have been predicted. One of the Board members blamed the Office of Education for their poor enrollment projections.

Another recommendation was made that the Chairman of the Board should be a businessman who was not easily swayed and who would take a "hard nosed" approach to financial matters. It was also stated that the Board gave too much authority to the college.

Management Can Make a Difference:
the Death and Rebirth
# of a Small, Private, Liberal Arts College

Loyd D. Andrew

Management Can Make a Difference:
the Death and Rebirth
# of a Small, Private, Liberal Arts College

This is the story of the death and rebirth of a small, private, liberal arts college. Today, the campus that was Epsilon College is prospering under the management of Phi College.

Epsilon College was chartered in 1964, a time of optimism and incredible growth in higher education. It opened its doors in 1968 when the optimism about higher education and growth rate was much less. Yet, Epsilon's birth and subsequent death should not be attributed to the foolery of over-optimism. The need for such a college as Epsilon was apparently talked about in the Forties. In 1951, the Baptist Association of a Southern metropolitan area appointed a committee to study the possibility of a Baptist college for the area. This committee asked the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention to make a survey to determine the feasibility of a college in the city. The survey of 1954 clearly established that this area "more than met every applicable criteria for the establishment of another college under either state or denominational auspices."

Moreover, the College did not come into being without some hard questions being raised. The local newspaper reported on October 8, 1955 that Baptists opposed the founding of a college in the city for fear that it might endanger support to other colleges in the state operated by the state Baptist Convention. At this time, the local Baptist Association established the following as a minimum criteria for the establishment of a school: an adequate site of 200 to 300 acreas; the erection of a

$750,000 administration and classroom building; and a $750,00 endowment.

It is not clear if the 1954 survey was updated between 1954 and 1964. However, the faith in the need for the establishment of a new college was such that the local Baptist Association was able to raise $900,000 to buy 562 acreas of choice land on an interstate highway, about $1,600 per acre. This land is reputedly worth between $10,000 and $50,000 per acre at the present time. When the college opened its doors in 1968, it had four large buildings with 23 classrooms, six laboratories, 37 faculty offices, an auditorium, a library, (but less than 14,000 books), a student lounge, a cafeteria and other facilities. It had enough space for more than 1,000 students, and little expense had been spared in building the facilities. Administrative offices, for example, were one-third to twice as large as similar offices at other schools and most had private restrooms. The Baptist Association and the Board of Trustees had dreamed large and supported their dream. The property in 1968 was valued at $7.5 million. The benefactors apparently expected to build an elite institution and appear to have had the financial resources to deliver. It was understood that the first academic vice-president had instruction to obtain the best possible faculty. Seventy-five per cent of the first faculty had doctoral degrees and were chosen after extensive interviews by the Academic Vice President, trustees, and private investigations. One of the faculty, subjected to a private investigation and subsequently hired, was not too impressed by the accuracy of the private investigator's report since it stated that he was a moderate drinker. "Somewhat of an exaggeration, I don't drink now, and never have." It is reasonable to assume that the intensive screening had as one of its purposes to ensure a faculty that would be responsive to the purpose of the college as set forth in the 1964 charter:

> The primary objective of the Corporation being the development and operation of an institution of higher learning, . . . dedicated to the search for God's truth as revealed to mankind, is being established and maintained by the Baptist denomination to impart to students, against a background of Christian faith, a knowledge of man, the universe in which they live, and the relationship of both to the Creator and our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Several sources who were familiar with the school and its purpose described it as a "church school" as opposed to a church-related institution. The academic program of the college was as ambitious as its building program. The catalog of 1969-70 listed ten active programs, from biology through religion, and announced plans for eight additional majors. In addition, pre-professional programs in nursing, dentistry, engineering, forestry, law, medicine, theology as well as two-year programs in secretarial science were offered. In May, 1968, six months before the scheduled opening, the Academic Vice President stated that the college could accept up to 750 freshmen for the fall quarter. It expected to draw students from a wide geographical area around the city.

The 750 enrollment never materialized. By August, 1968, the enrollment prediction had been revised to 300 students. When the school opened in the fall of 1968 there were 25 faculty members and 30 clerical, dietary, and maintenance employees to meet 286 students. The school had a Vice President for Academic Affairs, a Vice President of Business Affairs, and a Director of Student Affairs.

But it had only an acting president who was chairman of the Board of Directors and also Pastor of a very rich and powerful Baptist church in the city. Thus, the college started without a full-time president though the Acting President had been a leading proponent of the college from the earliest days.

Conflict between the Acting President and the Academic Vice President apparently developed very early in the history of the school. It is reported that the Vice President campaigned vigorously with the faculty against the acceptance of the Acting President as a president and urged a faculty screening committee to develop a job description for the presidency that would preclude the hiring of a former pastor. The conflict was observed by a 1969 Accreditation team of the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities which recommended that the college should "move quickly to resolve the tension between the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs." In its answer to the recommendation, the college in November, 1970 reported that it had "no further statement."

The accreditation team was also concerned about the school's lack of a "clear statement of purpose . . . embodying the concerns of the several publics whose support is essential to the operation of the college." Again, the college had no additional information to give in response to the recommendation. However, in answer to the recommendation that its purpose statement be published in official publications, the College noted that its philosophy was printed in the 1969-70 college catalog and was based upon the purpose indicated in the charter. The philosophy of the College according to the 1969-70 catalog appears to be much more open than the purpose set forth in its charter or the practice of the school according to observers who viewed it as a church school rather than a church-related school. According to the catalog, "the college strives to be profoundly Christian rather than narrowly sectarian. Religious activities are provided along with physical and social activities. . . . College aims to develop responsible citizens who are free to respond to their own thinking while pursuing their individual goals--goals which are continually subjected to rational criticism."

Thus, the college from its opening day appears to have had three major problems: conflict between the President and Academic Vice President; ambiguity concerning the purpose of the college; and serious under-enrollment in relationship to facilities and staffing.

The search for enrollment led the college to recruit academically low achievers, to waive tuition, and to offer generous financial aid incentives. Such practices may have provided bodies, but they added little, if anything, to revenue and they increased costs and seriously affected the image of a school seeking a strong academic reputation. The 1969 accreditation team twice criticized admission procedures.

It recommended (1) that the "college take steps to deal more realistically with the academically low-level achievers, both in terms of admissions and classroom evaluation" and (2) that the college "develop, refine, clearly state, and publish its policy of admitting students academically suspended from other institutions." (Status Report, November, 1970.)

Enrollment problems do not appear to have been the result of the market but to have been the result of marketing practice, and perhaps the conflict between administrators and the ambiguity about purpose. The college administration apparently had neither a recruitment plan nor a realistic enrollment forecast prior to the opening of the school. The Director of Admissions and Registration originally reported to the Dean of Student Affairs and apparently was untrained and inexperienced. The accreditation team advised the hiring of an experienced person to direct admissions and registration. The school answered the recommendation by stating that "it had since employed a competent person" for the position. (Status Report, November, 1970.)

Other difficulties besides inadequate marketing practices and conflict between administrators complicated the college's struggle for existence from its beginning. Facilities had been planned adequately, though perhaps too enthusiastically. From all reports, good faculty were recruited. However, the Accreditation Team of 1969 felt it necessary to recommend such things as the following:

1. The use of more modest and descriptive titles for administrative offices.
2. Development of an operational manual to contain job descriptions, institutional policies and regulations, etc. (Two years after its founding, the college still had to admit to having no such manual.)
3. Development of a ten-year plan and the hiring of a strong director of development.
4. Development of a clearly defined process for controlling curriculum.
5. The improvement of budget preparation.
6. The recognition of control of the budget as an administrative function, not a function of the Board of Trustees.

7. More detailed preparation of financial statements for the internal use of the administration.
8. The employment of no more teachers than could be used.
9. Development of a faculty manual.
10. Development of a more "sensitive ear to the Baptist constituency with reference to student activities."

From the accreditation reports, newspaper accounts, and the reports of observers who were involved from the founding to the eventual demise of the college, the picture is one of conflict, confusion, and lack of procedure and policy. On one side there was the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the faculty; on the other side, an acting President (later President) and Board of Trustees. The Board appears to have actively involved itself in the administration, including tight control and development of budget, and even intervened in the selection of faculty. It was a generous Board that had the resources and will to underwrite operating expenses for a period of four years, with little income coming to the college from tuition.

It was also a Board that strongly supported the founding father, the man who was Acting President. Before the death of the school, the Academic Vice President and most of the original faculty were fired. One who survived the day the "firing line-up" occured reported that he did not quite know why he survived. He theorized, "Maybe, because I failed to ask if I was going to be retained for another year."

The conflict among faculty, administration, students, and the Board of Trustees bubbled into full public view in spring 1971, when the Board negotiated the sale of 30 acres of land and the lease of additional acres for $2 million to a large food chain and other interests for the development of an office park. In reaction to the sale, nearly half of the 238 students filed a class-action suit against the Acting President, the Trustees of the College, and two corporations involved in the sale of land. The suit charged the college trustees and the Acting President "with deliberately acting to destroy the college as an institution of higher learning by wasting and deliberately dissipating the college's assets and properties."

The students lost the suit, and seven involved in the litigation were expelled.

The sale of land paid off the college debt, but financial difficulties due to low enrollment and over-building continued to haunt the school and talk of merger with Phi College, a Baptist college located in a nearby city, increased during 1971 and 1972. A significant number of major gifts, including a multi-million endowment were apparently lost because of student and faculty rebellion and general disenchantment with the progress of the school. Yet there were major gifts even as late as March 1972, when a member of the Acting President's former church donated $1 million. Two months after this gift, the arrangement of a merger with Phi College was announced. It became official in November 1972.

At the time that Epsilon College closed, enrollment was approximately 240 students. By 1975, as Epsilon-Phi College, the enrollment had grown to more than 1,000 full-time students and the college was out of financial difficulties. As nearly as can be determined, operating expenses are being covered by tuition, whereas tuition paid a minority of the expense of Epsilon College. One trustee is reported to have said during the last years of Epsilon, "We knew we would have to close the college when some of us figured out that we could pay the students' expenses to Harvard, including room and board, for less than we were paying to support them at (Epsilon)."

Why could Phi College management turn a campus around so rapidly? The external forces, such as competition from other colleges in the area, governmental regulations, policies, and subsidies, and economic conditions, had not changed. The campus of Epsilon-Phi College had been Epsilon's. A community college is located not many miles from the campus today as it was yesterday. Epsilon-Phi like Epsilon, is located in an area of white middle to upper middle class suburbanites, and both the old and new institutions are primarily dependent on commuters since they lacked and lack dormitories.

The mission of the two colleges is very much the same, particularly if one reads the purpose statements in the respective catalogs. Phi College makes clearer than Epsilon College that it is "no part of (Phi's) purpose to provide an artificial haven from reality by preventing students from being introduced to the non-Christian ideas and forces at work in our world . . . But at (Phi) the Christian understanding of man and his relation to God and the world is strongly present . . ."

The students at Epsilon-Phi College are considerably different from the early students of Epsilon. They are middle to high academic achievers, rather than low. They may be less dependent on financial aid, but the school has a strong financial aids program, and its financial aid officer knows the federal and state programs.

Many benefits came to what had been Epsilon as a result of its merger with Phi. First, there is the name. Phi College is an old institution. It first opened its doors in 1833. Its academic program is well known and highly respected. Second, Phi College was and is fully accredited and its accreditation status assisted in the early accreditation of Epsilon-Phi College. Epsilon College never achieved accreditation.

The other benefits that accrued to Epsilon College with the merger are less tangible and are harder to document than the above, but it may be that they are more significant. There is the matter of economy of scale though its value is sometimes misstated. The dinosaur was extremely large, but hardly adaptable. Bigness in institutions as in mammals and reptiles can encourage sloth and inertia. Communication costs and difficulties rise rapdily with the size of an institution. But there are specific economies of scales that can be obtained. Larger institutions can normally attract better managers, faculty and staff than small institutions for they offer more opportunities, more challenge, more room to grow, and probably, if they are not too large, less frustration. They normally provide greater security along with better opportunities, better salaries, and fringe benefits. Certain activities, such as financial management and institutional housekeeping tend to be more efficient if institutional size permits automation. Such is the case with Phi College, which has more than 3,000 students.

These economies of scales, however, do not explain the Phoenix-like rebirth of what had been the Epsilon College campus.

There is the matter of enrollment. Facilities existed for more than 1,000 students, and Epsilon College had initially, and for too many years afterwards, staffed as if it had 1,000 students. Because Phi College could develop an enrollment of 1,000 students, operating costs on a per student basis were more than halved. There is also evidence that Epsilon-Phi, unlike Epsilon, is designing curriculum and planning programs to ensure that each program is self-sustaining or nearly so. Epsilon in 1969 with less than 300 students had ten active majors and eight others planned. It offered course work in some of the latter. It was unable to deal with the reality of too small class size and programs with only three or four students until 1971 when financial exigency had been "writ large" for more than three years. Not until 1971 did it reduce what had become 13 active programs to seven, and there is some evidence that the cutting included some of the more productive programs.

Epsilon-Phi College with four times the students of Epsilon College offers only one more major than Epsilon had.

There is the matter of purpose and agreement on purpose, policy and procedure. Epsilon College opened with conflict between the Acting President and the Academic Vice President. The faculty and students tended to join forces with the Academic Vice President who had recruited most of the faculty while the President and Board stood alone, charged with administration and fund raising. There was no such conflict when Epsilon-Phi opened on what had been the campus of Epsilon. The dissident faculty and administrators who had been active in the conflict were gone. The students were tired of fights and anxious to get on about the business of education. Moreover, those that had been embroiled in the frays of yesterday were a small percentage of the new student body.

More important, however, was the operating philosophy of the administration of Phi College and, in particular, those administrators who were assigned to the new campus. As part of its effort to obtain accreditation, Epsilon-Phi in 1973, approximately 15 months after the merger was announced and only ten months after it was formalized, had produced a status report or self-study. From all reports, the self-study was used effectively as a tool for developing faculty understanding and commitment to the purposes and governance of the institution. A faculty manual was developed, including specific procedures for evaluating faculty. Epsilon College had not been able to develop such a document in more than three years.

The faculty and students of Epsilon-Phi view the administration as an open one, according to a limited survey. They understand the governance system and feel that their rights and responsibilities are well defined. Moreover, they respect the rights and responsibilities of the administration.

There are standing faculty committees on curriculum, welfare, library, admissions, teacher education and an executive committee. The relationship of the dean to the faculty and the staff and the President is clearly understood.

There is the quality of the administrative staff. The Dean of the College has been a member of the Phi College faculty since 1953 and has had administrative experience as acting chairman of the psychology department and head of the alternate Freshman Program for Orientation. In addition she is a well-known and highly respected teacher and researcher. She was a member of the President's Council at Phi College.

Another outstanding administrator (and there are probably others at Epsilon-Phi College) is the assistant to the President for Institutional Services. A Ph.D. and businessman, he views his job as providing the institutional services necessary for sound academic programs. Not least of these institutional services are planning, marketing and the allocation of financial resources. Behind his desk is a row of census books, the relevant statistics of which he seems to know by heart. Epsilon-Phi like Epsilon is more, rather than less, of a commuter school. The Assistant to the President for Institutional Services knows the number of residents within an eight-mile radius who have less than a four-year degree and the number that are housewives with time for daytime programs, as well as the number of men with the need for evening programs.

Work-study students are used extensively for maintenance. Consequently, the full-time maintenance staff consists primarily of supervisors who know how to work with and instruct students. The Assistant to the President for Institutional Services formerly ran a successful pharmacy. One of the first lessons he learned was that in "this city you have to have four things to attract customers--air conditioning, parking, a quality product, and courteous service. To attract students, you must provide the same things. We have the parking. The buildings are being air conditioned. We are raising funds for a gymnasium. We have the other facilities we need. The Dean and faculty are providing quality product and courteous service. Our faculty know their students. They work closely with them. We have a teaching faculty that is student oriented. Students are our customers. The faculty and staff understand that."

The Birth and Death of Three Small, Private, Liberal Arts Colleges--The Effect on Higher Education

Loyd D. Andrew

The Birth and Death of Three Small, Private, Liberal Arts Colleges--The Effect on Higher Education

Death of an institution like the death of an individual is more than a matter of weight and logistics, wills and mergers, balance sheets and taxes. In a period of four years, three small, private colleges died in an Eastern city. Their passing was felt by students, alumni, and perhaps most poignantly by those administrators and faculty who had participated in the development of the institutions and had a part in the burial rites.

It is the purpose of this account to examine the causes for the death of these three colleges and the effects that their passing had on higher education, if any.

The colleges are Zeta College, Eta University and Theta College. The first was born in the late nineteenth century. The latter two in mid-twenties and thirties of the 20th century, respectively. All three were urban commuter colleges, located in the downtown area of a large city. Primarily, they were concerned with preparing men (mostly white) and a few women for careers in business.

A recount of the birth and mission of the Zeta College invokes memories of Dicken's tales for it was started by the Young Men's Christian Association as a school for foundings. It grew with the city, but continued to be housed in the YMCA until the last year of its life. Its mission changed with the needs of society. In the twenties, it became a school of accounting while continuing to train a few men and more women in secretarial science. In the late forties and early fifties, it trained men and women to operate teletypewriters, which were just beginning to be used to cut tapes for automated operation of linotypes. However, its distinguishing contribution to higher education was in the training of accountants. Many of its alumni have held or are holding responsible positions in the state government and business.

"(Eta University) was founded in 1925 as a nonsectarian, non-profit private institution of higher education open to qualified men and women without regard to race, religion or national origin. Established initially to provide mature adult students with evening instruction in business and law, the University has grown steadily in purpose and function over the past half century."

Eta University was the strongest and the largest of the three colleges. Theta College's undergraduate division and its law school merged with the University in 1970. In 1973 the University adopted the students of Zeta College.

Both Theta College and Eta University have been responsible for training in addition to accountants a large number of lawyers, many of whom are or have been influential in public service as well as private business. For many years, these two colleges and the state university were the only law schools in the state. Theta College was founded in 1935, and its last president was among the first hired. He learned about the opening in a casual conversation with a bootblack who had heard that Theta College was looking for faculty.

Until the mid-sixties, all three schools generally succeeded in their purpose of providing professional, business and general training, particularly in the early fifties when the G. I. Bill of Rights assisted veterans. However, only Eta University was able to build the sizeable financial base required to recruit sufficiently qualified faculty and to build libraries and other facilities adequate for meeting accreditation standards by either professional or regional accrediting agencies.

Accrediting apparently did not become a problem until 1965, perhaps coincidentally with the passage of the most major of federal higher education acts. Students and potential students about that time became aware that successful applicants for government positions were graduated from accredited colleges and professional schools.

Students in the program pressured the school's administrators to seek accreditation and potential students sought educational opportunities elsewhere. At the same time, state support for public higher education increased. Public supported community colleges were opened in the late sixties, and these colleges competed for students by lower tuition rates. The programs which they offered were very similar to the semi-professional, vocational, and lower division programs of the private colleges.

In 1969, Theta College received some encouragement concerning accreditation from a visitation team. In 1970, the President, Academic Dean, and Business Manager attended the Middle States Educational Association in Atlantic City where they hoped to hear that they had been accredited. Instead, they learned that they hadn't.

Later, it was suggested that Theta College as well as Zeta College consider merger with Eta University. Theta College with approximately $750,000 in cash assets, a small building, and a library, chose to merge with the Eta University. It had at the time of the merger approximately 500 students and five or six full-time faculty. Eta had approximately 5,000 students. Three of Theta's faculty and two of its administrators joined Eta University. The other full-time faculty found jobs elsewhere. The Business Manager retired. The merger was characterized by one of the administrators as good for the students because Eta University was fully accredited two years after the merger. No one, staff, faculty ot students, was hurt financially or in status by the merger.

In 1970, Zeta College also had the opportunity to merge but chose not to.

A former staff member explained. "We wanted to keep our own identity. I guess it was pride and love for the school. Being a small school, we knew our students. They were our students and they were treated as people. Students are the main part of the school."

Zeta College struggled until 1973 to retain its sense of identity, moving in 1972 to the campus of a Catholic institution which had closed shortly before. For the first time it left its home in the YMCA, moving away from the source of its students. Why? "I don't know whether you have been into the City or not, but . . . I mean people just didn't want to go to school in the YMCA building, the parking was bad. They were afraid to go to their cars at night . . ."

The rent of the Catholic campus was high and the distance was far for commuting. By late 1972, the school had few assets with which to negotiate a merger and there was no hope for continuing. The students of the school "were adopted" by Eta University in 1973. "The students were pleased. The President (president of Eta University for many years and still president) did beautifully for the students."

In June 1973, the State Council for Higher Education reported on the financial condition of private higher education in the state. The report listed seven private institutions that were likely to incur significant deficits through fiscal year 1977. Eta University, strengthened by the recent merger of Theta College and the adoption of Zeta College, was among these. It had only recently been fully accredited by the Middle States Educational Association.

The report stated that Eta University had adequate resources to finance its operation in 1972 but was likely to "incur significant deficits through 1976-1977." It predicted continued enrollment decline in the undergraduate school and that low tuition and fee structures would prohibit the school from increasing its tuition and fees by nine percent per year, required to break even.

Therefore, in 1975, the State legislature acted to bring Eta University into the state system of higher education "as an upper division academic institution, that is, third and fourth collegiate year and post graduate studies."

After many years of service to the citizens of the state and surrounding states, two schools in the city lost their identity in the early seventies. The third school retained its name, but is now a member of the state system, its mission radically altered. Its tuition rates are lower than before; its enrollment increased in 1975, contrary to expectations, since it can no longer offer lower division work. It has a thriving law school that is in the process of being accredited by the American Bar Association.

The faculty, the administrators, and the students have more security than they did in the hectic days of 1965 to 1975. The students' degrees will be accepted without question. The faculty and administrators are probably earning more than before and have better fringe benefits.

Admission standards to the law school are being raised; there is not enough room for all that apply, even those who are qualified. The school still serves many of the same kind of students that its private predecessors did--mature adults seeking professional and business training.

The University even before its merger with the state system was reaching out to the suburbs and beginning to seek out blacks and women. These outreach and affirmative action programs should be encouraged by the merger with the state system.

Once, the schools were a minor burden on federal and state governments. This burden included financial aid to students, tax exemptions, and the State's direct but small contribution to private schools.

As a state institution, Eta University will receive a much larger portion of its operating and capital budget from the state and much less from the students. The educational quality of the institution should be better.

But there are haunting questions. Paper work and the cost of administration is increasing. Class sizes are growing. Admission standards are being raised. There is more control. Will there be less competitive drive? Will students become social security numbers rather than people? Will the State tire of its ever-increasing burden?

Iota University: State Aid To Private Education

Burton Friedman

III.68

Iota University: State Aid To Private Education

Iota University is a nonsectarian, coeducational, four-year accredited liberal arts college located in the Eastern United States, roughly midway between two metropolitan areas. Iota University found itself in extremely difficult circumstances in 1972 and was reported by the U. S. Office of Education as having met its demise in that year. As in Mark Twain's famous statement, the reports of Iota University's death were greatly exaggerated. In July, 1972, the institution became a "state-related" institution within the state's higher education community. That change in status created an influx of new financial support, relieved the institution's financial distress, and assured the continuation of its operations.

However exaggerated the reports of its end, it appears to be proper and useful to include Iota among the institutions being examined. The university apparently came dangerously near to death and it might well have succumbed. Achievement of state-related status relieved the crisis. Had it not been so relieved, the institution would have found itself at a most critical juncture. It might have had to close. If it remained open, it would have had to make drastic reductions in staff or programs or both in order to reduce its expenditures. In either case, it would not have remained the same as before.

The happy circumstances of its continued life, in this case, does not disqualify Iota University from consideration among the liberal arts colleges which met their demise during the period under study. On the contrary, that happy circumstance makes Iota a most interesting and productive case in point. Its staff has not dispersed and its records have not disappeared. The principal persons who lived through the crisis remain available to discuss it, and that fact is highly advantageous.

The academic year 1971-72, for purposes of this study, is taken as Iota's "last" year. The following year was its first in state-related status and, as noted, might have been an empty or radically-changed year if the previous completely independent status had continued. At the "closing" in 1972, Iota owed $250,000 at the bank, had an accumulated deficit of $727,000 and had interfund debts of $782,000. It is moot whether the total $1,759,000 difficulty would have sufficed to cause the doors to close. Had they remained open, however, it is believed by Iota personnel that the institution could never have been the same.

Iota University was established in 1854 and received its present name in 1866. Initially it was an institute "for the scientific, classical and theological education of colored youth of the male sex." Iota University, therefore, is the oldest of the institutions in the United States oriented essentially to a black clientele. It is not exclusively either male or black, however. When it took the name Iota University, it was to enroll students of "every clime and complexion" and two whites were among its first baccalaureate class of six male graduates. In 1972, its steadily growing enrollment reached 1,037 and was two-thirds male and ninety percent black.

Iota is a liberal arts college which, in common with many others, was but is no longer church-related. Its church connection was Presbyterian until 1959 and the end to that connection probably was hastened by the earlier closing of the institution's seminary.

Iota celebrated its centenary in 1954. At that point, twenty percent of the black medical doctors in the U. S. were persons whose undergraduate studies had been completed at Iota. In 1972, observers of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, in their report, noted that "Every year (Iota) graduates about 200 students and about fifty percent of them go on to graduate studies. Thirty students, five of whom are women, who graduated between 1967 and 1971, are now in medical school. Few institutions of higher education can approach this achievement." In late 1975, Iota personnel report that the proportion of their graduates proceeding to medical studies may be decreasing, but that the proportion who continue with graduate studies of one sort or another clearly is not decreasing. Their observation is that Iota graduates now are entering academic fields in growing numbers, and they attribute that tendency at least in part to the effects of the equal opportunity categories of legislation and action.

In short, Iota is an essentially private, no longer church-related, small liberal arts college of considerable distinction. Iota's reputation is built upon an impressive record of successful work with poor black young people--in earlier years particularly from the rural south, and later increasingly from the inner city--and with black students from Africa, who now form a declining proportion of students on campus. Most of its students are full-time students in residence.

During the 1971-72 year, the total cost to a student of tuition, general fees, room and board was $2,160 for the academic year. Enrollment totaled 1,037 full-time equivalent students. In 1962-63, the corresponding figure was 422 and it increased steadily during the decade, swiftly to 928 in 1967-68, more slowly thereafter. Student aid revenues peaked at $856,000 for 1967-68, then declined to $544,000 in 1970-71 when they were exceeded by student aid expenditures by $163,000. The educational and general expenditures per full-time equivalent student peaked at $3,600 in 1970-71 and 1971-72. Beginning with 1966-67, Iota experienced an annual operating deficit of $3,000, then $27,000, $121,000, $232,000 and, in 1970-71, $408,000. In 1971-72, Iota's budget was in balance, but its accumulated current funds deficit had reached $727,000; its building program was about to create significant new problems of debt service; it owed money at the bank; and inter-fund borrowing had created other problems.

According to the President, and other officials, only the achievement of state-related status on July 7, 1972, saved Iota from the trauma of either closing its doors or imposing massive expenditure reductions upon its future operations. Those reductions could have required the dismissal of faculty members, the elimination of programs and other forms of major surgery. Because the infusion of state funds was made in the nick of time, that crisis situation did not arise. It is, of course, moot whether the institution could have survived the massive surgery that confronted it.

As the President and others describe the situation of that time, a pollyannish attitude prevailed. "The Lord will provide," many felt, notwithstanding the bleak future clearly indicated by the financial facts of life. The accumulated deficit was clear and present. A major benefactor had died, and the absence of his benefactions would create a major new gap between revenues and expenditures. The burden of payment for new construction was about to be felt. Nevertheless, when the President set forth the facts to the faculty, demonstrating that there was no money in sight, much less on hand, the responses were oblivious to those facts. In effect, we are told, the first response was, "That's all very interesting, no doubt. Now...let's talk about faculty salary increases for next year."

Despite the financial facts, several departments proposed additions to staff and requested substantial sums for equipment. "Previous administrations," said faculty, "always had a special source of money for such necessary items." Iota's financial vice president, tells us that the only proper name for that special source of money is "deficit", and additional deficit financing, by 1972, was out of the question.

One can live with a deficit, suggest the gentlemen at Iota, but not if it keeps growing. If it continues to grow, one finds one's self paying February bills in March, then in April, then in May, June, July or later. Somewhere along the line, there comes a day of reckoning. No matter how friendly the institution's banker, if the accumulated deficit steadily increases things cannot continue and, ultimately, do not continue.

At least for the present, however, Iota's financial problems have been relieved by the institution's new status. Now formally affiliated with the state, Iota University is a state-related institution in the state system of higher education as designated by the state legislature. Iota's management and control continue to vest with the University's Board of Trustees, a number of whom now are appointed by officials of the state. Appropriations are made to the

University each year in amounts specified by the state legislature. Iota, therefore, joins the state university, as well as other universities, within this most interesting and provocative arrangement whereby state government undertakes to relieve the financial stresses of private institutions without assuming ~~full~~ ownership and control thereof.

In 1971-72, prior to entering into state-related status, Iota received 20.7 percent of its current fund dollar from the state. In 1973-74, that percentage had become 34.8. The difference--more than a million dollars--relieved the pressure and enables Iota to continue to serve its clientele.

Iota's financial difficulties reflect various pressures. Tuition rates and the fee structure were held low because the institution's clientele is a low-income group, but costs increase for the philanthropic institution as rapidly as for the profit-seeking one. The ratio of faculty members to students had been held low to an extent that perhaps is admirable for instructional purposes but places a strain on finances. Too many sections of too many courses, Iota's executives say, enrolled too few students to be economical. The amortization of the costs of recent construction was about to create major new financial demands. Some sources of receipts were beginning to go dry. The amounts of financial assistance sought by students were increasing, staff pressures for higher salaries were increasing, and costs in general were rising. The University found itself with a slightly shrinking income base and a sharply growing set of demands for dollars.

Mu College

Burton D. Friedman

III.75

Mu College

The Kappa Order of Sisters in Mu City, in the central U. S., established a college-level educational program to serve their own membership and religious community. That program subsequently was established in Mu City as Kappa College, a Catholic liberal arts institution for girls. The Order created a separate corporation, wholly owned and governed by the Order, to govern and operate the College. A similar small institution for men subseqently was merged into Kappa College, making it a coeducational Catholic liberal arts college. Following Vatican II, the Order reconsidered its mission and programs, concluding that the operation of a college no longer was central to its role in life. On the other hand, the Order also concluded that Kappa College was performing a useful service to the broader community of Mu City, hence ought not be dismantled simply because of a change in the role of the Order.

Given those two conclusions -- that the Order should not maintain a college, but that the existing Kappa College should not be dismantled -- the decision was made to attempt a transfer of ownership, governance and direction from the Order to a Mu City oriented, community-based, lay and non-denominational body. A voluntary Board of Regents was created to advise the Order's college corporation board. The transfer to new membership was deemed both desirable and practicable.

Civic leaders were contacted. A separate corporation was created: Kappa College Corporation. The new Corporation entered into a contract with the religious community's college corporation. Under terms of that contract, the new corporation would undertake to manage the College during a trial period of five years. During the trial, one fourth of the Board and its committees would be members of the religious community. At the close of that five-year period, all parties still being agreeable to the proposition, full ownership would be transferred from one corporation to the other. At that point, the Order's formal participation in the institution would come to an end, but the broader Mu City community would continue to enjoy the benefits of the College which would be re-named for the city.

The new corporation designated a lay President of the College in 1970. The man chosen had been a college president elsewhere. Operations of the institution continued and were modified under the new management. The institution was renamed Mu College after about 2 1/2 years. Enrollment grew, full North Central accreditation was renewed, facilities were expanded, an accredited master's level program in education was initiated and appeared to be thriving, and a graduate program in business was planned. Endowment grew. Gifts increased. A bequests program was promising. Full-time enrollment reached approximately 700 and total enrollment approximately 2,000; full-time enrollment was about equally divided between men and women. The volume and value of services contributed by members of the religious Order decreased. The new President agreed at the outset to guide the operation during five years; he actually remained for five and a half years to the close of 1975.

Six months later, Mu College became bankrupt and ceased operations permanently. Bankruptcy proceedings still continue. Institutional assets exceeded liabilities at the time of closing, but institutional assets were not liquid. Problems of cash flow had become so serious that further operation became impossible.

The demise of Mu College appears to have resulted from what has been described as an unfortunate concatenation of untimely events, the timing of which overcame--indeed overwhelmed--all those conditions and circumstances which had permitted the Regents and the President to face the future with confidence and favorable prospects.

Favorable factors were varied. Enrollment had grown, indicating acceptance within the Mu City community. The newly-established and accredited graduate program in education had flourished and was contributing to improvement of the institution's financial condition it was the only such program offered to students in a broad geographic area. The local business community had endorsed and was willing to support the proposed new graduate program in business. The endowment had increased from a level of $150-200,000 to that of about $400,000. A program designed to benefit the College through wills and bequests of benefactors appeared to be promising, and the prospects were that the institution would benefit by perhaps $5,000,000 within a comparatively few years. The North Central Association had renewed accreditation of the undergraduate programs. The reduction in services contributed by members of the religious Order had not created serious financial problems. An annual operating deficit was (and had been) small, and meeting that small deficit was (and had been) assured by principal local benefactors of the College. The growing enrollment included about 16 percent black students, a proportion that matched or exceeded the percentage of blacks within the Mu City service area.

Other circumstances developed, however, and other less favorable events occurred. These events centered about the views, attitudes, well-being, and behavior of the institution's principal benefactors who were also principal financial leaders of the Mu City community. The following items appear to include major contributing causes for the institution's demise:

> A principal benefactress died, leaving a bequest of roughly $500,000 to Mu College. The College apparently took spending actions based on the assumption of prompt receipt of that bequest. The state government however, obtained a lien on the entire estate of the deceased, including all bequests to eleemosynary institutions, applying a hitherto ignored law for the first time. A cash problem therefore was aggravated, because money had been spent before it was received, and its receipt was now in doubt. The College might have obtained the money from the bequest in the long run, of course, but circumstances precluded the long run from becoming a reality.
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> The College made direct contact with the head of the principal family whose support was critical to the institution, seeking major, long-run and continuing financial support, and implicitly offering to name the College for him. The gentleman was uncertain whether to accept so large a continuing commitment and made no decision. His son, however, was antagonized by the fact of such contact, and to so great an extent as to become virtually an adversary of the College.
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> A second of the primary benefactors of the College was asked to head a fund-raising campaign among the Mu City commercial, financial and industrial community. He accepted. Unfortunately, by the time the big fund-raising meeting of thirty persons was held, the campaign director had become incapacitated and unreachable. The son of the principal benefactor did not encourage the others to lend their support. They ultimately declined to do so.
>
> The thirty questioned whether the College offered anything to the community that was not available elsewhere. The question was prompted by the principal benefactor's son, who held the opinion that it did not. At his insistence and expense, an independent expert review was made of that question. The reviewer's report was highly favorable to the College, citing the "Mu College Plan" for intensive but interrupted study as one unique feature of the College, and citing its graduate program in education as another. At the same gentleman's insistence and expense, an independent expert on fund-raising studied the financial feasibility and fund-raising prospects of the College; his report also was favorable. Nevertheless, the gentleman in question declined to lend the College his support, and the committee of thirty followed his leadership.

> At one point, the Mu County government was prepared to lend the College a substantial sum of money at a very favorable 4 percent interest rate. The loan was never consummated. According to one account, the opportunity was dissipated when the College's Board, becoming over-enthusiastic about it, sought to increase the amount of the loan. That action, which might also have diminished the interest of the County officials, certainly served to delay consummation of the loan. The delay, if nothing else, changed the timing and made such a loan politically less conceivable. The opportunity was lost.
>
> At a slightly different point, efforts were undertaken to consolidate institutional debt under one bank loan, most of the Mu City banks having declared their interest in and willingness to participate in such an arrangement. The loan would be backed partly by a mortgage on the College land, which was understood to consist of 90 lake-front acres. This transaction fell through upon discovery that the land consisted only of 50 acres, the other part of the land title having been transferred by the Order from its college corporation to its religious corporation. The land in question had been acquired, it was reported, with the proceeds of a much earlier fund-raising campaign among the major benefactors and other citizens of the Mu community, i.e., during the period of the transition from the religious community's internal educational center to the liberal arts Kappa College.

One effect of this concatenation of events was to reduce the support received from the family that had been the primary benefactors of the College. A further effect was to reduce the support, and to reduce the prospects for future support, from the commercial, financial and industrial leaders of the broader Mu City community.

Pressures for cash, meanwhile, were present and beyond the present reach of the College. Temporizing expedients might have permitted operations to continue. Under the circumstances, however, the Regents saw no successful ending to their difficulties. They decided to end the situation, closing Mu College.

Mu College had been the only institution of higher education in Mu City. Most of its students, whether full or part-time, were local residents. They, of course, lost the convenience and economic advantages of being able to attend a local college. A branch of a state university is open in a nearby town. It may be assumed that transfer to that branch offered a reasonable alternative to many of Mu's students. However, winter-time commuting in the Mu area is a venturesome affair, so that it also may be assumed that the rate of academic progress of Mu's former students might very well decline: fair-weather students cannot advance as rapidly as year-round students. Mu's masters degree candidates, on the other hand, would have found no conveniently-located alternative to Mu's graduate program in education; their further education is problematical.

Therefore, it may be concluded that the closing of Mu represented a genuine loss: the loss of an apparently healthy member of the population of small, private, liberal arts colleges in the United States; the loss to Mu City area students of a full-accredited, easily-reached and therefore economic opportunity to acquire a higher education; the loss of the efforts and accumulated good will earned during the rather long life of Mu's religious predecessor, Kappa College; and the loss to the community of the well-educated group of citizens engaged by the College; and the further loss to the community of the other advantages derived from having a thriving college in its midst.

CHAPTER IV

CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMISE AND LIVE INVISIBLE COLLEGES

INTRODUCTION

John F. Murphy

The following is a "capsule" history of fifty-nine colleges that closed or merged during the early seventies. Some of the colleges which are included were founded during the fifties and sixties by Catholic orders to train women religious and were usually adjunct institutions to mother houses. Therefore, they had a special and limited purpose.

In the early 1950's a movement began among Roman Catholic sisters in the U. S. which needs comment because of its possible relationship to this study of private colleges which have closed or merged.

The movement was organized as the Sister Formation Conference. The purpose of the SFC was to encourage the development of separate college programs for the education and personal formation of the young women religious. In some instances this meant merely arranging separate sections of courses in colleges for women sponsored by religious orders. In other cases it involved the opening of small liberal arts colleges on the grounds of mother houses of religious orders.

These separate programs or new institutions were based on a point of view that the young sister could achieve her personal and educational goals best in a more secluded environment.

The influence of the SFC program was significant but limited in its duration. By the mid-sixties it began to decline, and this for two reasons:

(1) Under the influence of the II Vatican Council, a different point of view emerged among the women religious. Rather than isolate themselves from outside contacts, a new philosophy of sisters' education began to predominate, viz. one that encouraged education and formation with others, especially with lay students.

(2) The number of young women joining religious orders sharply declined.

There were several results of this change.

(1) Some institutions, established only for sisters, opened their doors to lay students.

(2) Some institutions simply closed as they had insufficient students to warrant their continuance.

The days were numbered for some colleges in the first category, as the numbers seeking college admission began to decline, and as growth of the tuition gap created increased enrollment problems in independent institutions. Most of these small colleges were eventually forced to close.

The importance of the foregoing to the present study is that these colleges were not "typical", were special purpose institutions whose purpose disappeared, and probably should not categorized with other closed or merged private colleges without distorting the purpose and, more importantly, the results of this study.

No analysis has been made of all closed or merged Catholic colleges to determine which institutions were in the SFC category. However, most of the colleges founded as a response to the SFC have been identified in the following profiles and marked by an asterisk (*).

Profiles of Fifty-nine Colleges That Closed, Merged or Became Public Institutions Between 1970 and 1975

Lois Beeken

IV.1

Profiles of Fifty-nine Colleges That Closed, Merged or Became Public Institutions Between 1970 and 1975

PRESCOTT COLLEGE (1965-1975)

Prescott College, located six miles north of the city of Prescott, Arizona, was an independent, coeducational institution, which offered a liberal arts program accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1975.

MARYMOUNT COLLEGE (1933-1973)

Marymount College, located in Los Angeles, California, was a Roman Catholic coordinate institution which began its operation in 1933 as a two-year college in Westwood. It offered a liberal arts and a teachers' program which were accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. In 1973 Marymount merged with Loyola University.

TAHOE COLLEGE (1967-1971)

Tahoe College, located in Tahoe Paradise, California, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a Bachelor of Arts degree in academic fields based upon a score of liberal arts studies and pre-professional programs not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1971.

NOTRE DAME OF WILTON (1961-1972) *

Notre Dame of Wilton, located in Wilton, Connecticut, was founded as a Roman Catholic institution for women religious. The college, which admitted lay students for the first time in 1969, offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program not accredited by a regional association. The institution closed in 1971. Previous to its founding as a separate institution, it was a branch of the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore, Maryland.

DUNBARTON COLLEGE OF HOLY CROSS (1935-1973)

Dunbarton College of Holy Cross, located in Washington, D. C., was a Roman Catholic institution for women. In 1938 the college initiated a four-year program of liberal arts and teacher education which were accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1973.

NEW COLLEGE (1960-1975)

New College, located in Sarasota, Florida, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts and a general education program accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The college became a public supported institution in 1975.

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*See introduction to this chapter.

ATLANTA BAPTIST COLLEGE (1968-1973)

Atlanta Baptist College, located in Atlanta, Georgia, was a coeducational institution affiliated with the Atlanta Association of Baptist Churches. In 1973 the college merged with Mercer which is located in Macon, Georgia. Atlanta Baptist offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program which were not accredited by a regional association.

CHURCH COLLEGE OF HAWAII (1955-1974)

Church College of Hawaii, located in a rural community on the island of Oahu, was a coeducational institution controlled by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. In 1974 it merged with Brigham Young University. The college offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program which were accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

MAUNA OLU COLLEGE (1861-1971)

Mauna Olu College, located on the Hawaiian island of Maui, was a coeducational institution founded as a Congregational Mission Seminary in 1861. When it closed it was non-sectarian with a student body composed of Catholics, Protestants, Buddhists, and others. The college offered a liberal arts program which was accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. In 1971 Mauna Olu merged with United States International University.

PESTALOZZI-FROEBEL TEACHERS COLLEGE (1896-1971)

Pestalozzi-Froebel Teachers College, located in Chicago, Illinois, was an independent coeducational institution which had as its primary purpose and function the training and preparation of classroom teachers for nursery school, kindergarten, and the primary grades. Its training program was recognized by the state accrediting agency. In 1971 Pestalozzi-Froebel merged with the National College of Education in Evanston, Illinois.

SAINT DOMINIC COLLEGE (1963-1970) *

Saint Dominic College, located in Saint Charles, Illinois, was apparently founded for women religious and only later became a coeducational Roman Catholic institution which offered a liberal arts and teacher preparatory program which were not accredited. The college closed in 1970.

TOLENTINE COLLEGE (1957-1973)

Tolentine College, located in Olympia Fields, Illinois, was a coeducational Roman Catholic institution which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program which were accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1973.

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*See introduction to this chapter.

SAINT JOSEPH'S CALUMET COLLEGE (1951-1973)

Saint Joseph's Calumet College, located in East Chicago, Indiana, is a Roman Catholic coeducational institution which offers programs in business, liberal arts and teacher education, accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college was erroneously reported to have closed in 1973.

MIDWESTERN COLLEGE (1965-1970)

Midwestern College, located in Denison, Iowa, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program that were not accredited. The college closed in 1970.

PARSONS COLLEGE (1875-1973)

Parsons College, located in Fairfield, Iowa, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered programs in liberal arts and teacher and professional education accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1973.

COLLEGE OF EMPORIA (1882-1973)

College of Emporia, located in Emporia, Kansas, was a coeducational institution founded in 1882 by the Presbyterian Synod of Kansas. It offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1973.

MOUNT SAINT SCHOLASTICA (1877-1971)

Mount Saint Scholastica, located in Atchinson, Kansas, was a Roman Catholic institution for women which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1971 the college formally merged with its "brother" institution, St. Benedict's College in Atchinson, Kansas. Prior to that date, the colleges for most purposes were organizationally and financially the same institution. Thus the college as a resource was not lost.

MILTONVALE WESLEYAN COLLEGE (1909-1972)

Miltonvale Wesleyan College, located in Miltonvale, Kansas, was a coeducational institution founded in 1909 by the Wesleyan Methodist Church as a training center for its youth in the Midwest. The college offered a program in liberal arts which was not accredited. In 1972 Miltonvale merged with Bartlesville Wesleyan in Oklahoma.

BALTIMORE COLLEGE OF COMMERCE (1909-1971)

Baltimore College of Commerce, located in Baltimore, Maryland, was a coeducational YMCA college, which offered the following programs: business, teacher and professional education, accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Business Schools. In 1971 the college merged with the University of Baltimore.

EASTERN COLLEGE (1928-1970)

Eastern College, located in Baltimore, Maryland, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered programs in liberal arts, law and commerce, not accredited by a regional association. In 1970 Eastern College merged with the University of Baltimore.

MOUNT SAINT AGNES COLLEGE (1852-1971)

Mount Saint Agnes College, located in Baltimore, Maryland, was a Roman Catholic institution for women which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1971 the institution merged with Loyola College.

ST. JOSEPH COLLEGE (1809-1973)

St. Joseph College, located in Emmitsburg, Maryland, was a Roman Catholic institute for women which offered programs in liberal arts, and teacher and professional education accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1973.

UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE (1925-1975)

The University of Baltimore, located in Baltimore, Maryland, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered the following programs: liberal arts, teacher education and professional education including a School of Law and a School of Business, Industry and Management. The College was accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1975 the University became a public-supported institution.

CARDINAL CUSHING COLLEGE (1952-1971) *

Cardinal Cushing College, located in Brookline, Massachusetts, was founded as Roman Catholic instiution for women religious which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program in addition to a terminal occupational program accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The first A.B. degrees were granted in 1958. The college closed in June 1972.

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* See introduction to this chapter.

MOUNT ALVERNIA COLLEGE (1947-1973) *

Mount Alvernia College, Located in Newton, Massachusetts, was founded as Roman Catholic institution for women religious with a two-year program in 1947. It began to offer a four-year program in approximately 1959 in liberal arts and teacher preparation. These programs were not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1973.

NEWTON COLLEGE OF THE SACRED HEART (1946-1975)

Newton College, located in Newton, Massachusetts, was an independent institution for women which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1975 the college merged with Boston College.

MACINAC COLLEGE (1966-1973)

Macinac College, located in Macinac Island, Michigan, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts program not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1973.

LEA COLLEGE ON LAKE CHAPEAU (1966-1973)

Lea College, located at Albert Lea, Minnesota, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered programs in liberal arts and professional education not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1973.

MARILLAC COLLEGE (1955-1974) *

Marillac College, located in St. Louis, Missouri, was a Roman Catholic institute founded for women religious. It offered programs in liberal arts, teacher and professional education accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1973.

PARK COLLEGE (1875-1975)

Park College, located in Kansas City, Missouri, was a coeducational institution affiliated with the United Presbyterian Church. It offered programs in liberal arts, teacher and professional education accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1975 Park College merged with Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa.

HIRAM SCOTT COLLEGE (1965-1971)

Hiram Scott College, located in Scotsbluff, Nebraska, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program which were not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1971.

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* See introduction to this chapter.

JOHN J. PERSHING (1966-1971)

John J. Pershing, located in Beatrice, Nebraska, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts program not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1971.

JOHN F. KENNEDY (1965-1973)

John F. Kennedy, located in Wahoo, Nebraska, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts program and a teacher preparatory program not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1973.

BELKNAP COLLEGE (1963-1973)

Belknap College, located in Center Harbor, New Hampshire, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program as well as a terminal occupational program accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1973.

CANAAN COLLEGE (1955-1972)

Canaan College, located in Canaan, New Hampshire, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts program not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1972.

SHELTON COLLEGE (1885-1971)

Shelton College, located in Cape May, New Jersey, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts program not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1971.

COLLEGE OF ARTESIA (1915-1971)

The College of Artesia, located in Artesia, New Mexico, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1971.

BRENTWOOD COLLEGE (1955-1971) *

Brentwood College, located in Brentwood, New York, was a Roman Catholic institution for women religious which offered a teacher preparatory program accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1971.

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*See introduction to this chapter.

FINCH COLLEGE (1900-1975)

Finch College, in New York City, was an independent women's institution which offered a liberal arts and teacher preparatory program accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1975.

ROGERS COLLEGE (1931-1973)*

Rogers College, located in Maryknoll, New York, was a Roman Catholic Institution for women religious which offered a liberal arts program and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1973.

MILLS COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (1909-1974)

Mills College of Education, located in New York City, was an independent, women's college which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1974 it merged with New School in New York.

NOTRE DAME OF STATEN ISLAND (1931-1971)

Notre Dame of Staten Island was a Roman Catholic, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1971 the college merged with St. John's University in New York.

MARY MANSE COLLEGE (1872-1975)

Mary Manse College, located in Toledo, Ohio, was a Roman Catholic, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The college closed in 1975.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE (1928-1975)*

St. John's College, located in Cleveland, Ohio was founded as a Roman Catholic institution for women religious which offered programs in liberal arts and teacher and professional education accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. It subsequently became coeducational. The college closed in 1975.

WESTERN COLLEGE (1853-1974)

Western College, located in Oxford, Ohio, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts program and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1974 it merged with Miami University.

*See introduction to this chapter.

MARYLHURST COLLEGE (1893-1974)

Marylhurst College, located in Marylhurst, Oregon, was an independent women's college which offered programs in liberal arts and teacher education accredited by the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools. The college closed in 1974.

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY (1854-1974)

Lincoln University, located four miles east of Oxford, Pennsylvania, was an independent, coeducational institution. It was the oldest college in the United States having as its original purpose the highest education of Negro youth. It offered a liberal arts program accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1972 the college became a "state-related" institution within Pennsylvania's higher education community.

CATHOLIC TEACHERS COLLEGE (1929-1970) *

Catholic Teachers College, located in Providence, Rhode Island, was founded as a Roman Catholic institution for women religious. It offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1970.

MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH COLLEGE (1951-1975) *

Mount Saint Joseph College, located in Wakefield, Rhode Island, was a Roman Catholic college for women religious which offered a liberal arts and a teacher preparatory program not accredited by a regional association. It was formally chartered in 1953. The college closed in 1975.

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTOWN (1770-1971)

The College of Charlestown, located in Charlestown, South Carolina, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a program in liberal arts accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In 1971 the college became a state-supported institution.

LANDER COLLEGE (1872-1972)

Lander College, located in Greenwood, South Carolina, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a liberal arts program and a teacher preparatory program accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In 1972 the college became a state-supported institution.

SIENNA COLLEGE (1851-1971)

Sienna College, located in Memphis, Tennessee, was a Roman Catholic coeducational institution which offered programs in liberal arts and teacher education accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The college closed in 1971.

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*See introduction to this chapter.

DOMINICAN COLLEGE (1945-1975)

Dominican College, located in Houston, Texas, was a Roman Catholic, women's college which offered programs in liberal arts, teacher and professional education accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The college closed in 1975.

UNIVERSITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI (1947-1973)

The University of Corpus Christi, located in Corpus Christi, Texas, was an independent, coeducational institution formerly affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. It offered programs in liberal arts and teacher education accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The college closed in 1973.

VERMONT COLLEGE (1834-1972)

Vermont College, located in Montpelier, Vermont, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a terminal occupational program in addition to programs in liberal arts and professional education. It was accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In 1972 the college merged with Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont.

COLLEGE OF THE POTOMAC (1969-1972)

College of the Potomac, located in Arlington, Virginia, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered a program in liberal arts which was not accredited by a regional association. The college closed in 1972.

STRATFORD COLLEGE (1852-1974)

Stratford College, located in Danville, Virginia, was an independent women's college which offered programs in liberal arts and teacher education accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The college closed in 1974.

DOMINICAN COLLEGE (1864-1974)

Dominican College, located in Racine, Wisconsin, was an independent, coeducational institution which offered programs in liberal arts and teacher education accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The founding date is questionable. The college closed in 1974.

MOUNT SAINT PAUL COLLEGE (1962-1971)

Mount Saint Paul College, located in Waukesha, Wisconsin, was founded as a seminary which eventually offered programs in liberal arts, teacher and professional education not accredited by a regional association. In 1971 Mount Saint Paul College merged with Dominican College in Racine, which closed three years later.

General Characteristics of Invisible Colleges

Lois Beeken

Mary Giles

General Characteristics of Invisible Colleges

The Carnegie Commission system of classification places invisible colleges as a subgroup of Liberal Arts Colleges and designates them as Liberal Arts II. Liberal Arts II is, essentially, a residual category, composed of those institutions which are not doctoral-granting nor comprehensive universities and colleges but which do not meet the criteria for inclusion in the Liberal Arts I category. There are many similarities between Liberal Arts I and Liberal Arts II colleges, but the major distinction between them, on which the Carnegie judgment is primarily based, is selectivity of students. Liberal Arts I colleges are termed "elite " and they require a combined Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT) score of 1075 or above for admission.

Liberal Arts II, the "invisible" colleges, are as a group far less stringent in their admission standards. Although they accept highly qualified students, the general level of SAT scores is below 1074. It is, however, the moderate to low selectivity of students that enables invisible colleges to offer a real alternative to approximately ten percent of the American undergraduate college population, and, thus, to contribute significantly to the total context of postsecondary education.

To compare invisible colleges in meaningful ways to the whole of American postsecondary education is difficult because of weaknesses in the data on higher education and the varying classification systems used by different agencies. Some indices of the relationships are presented in this section. They must be considered only as general estimates, but they are offered in an attempt to define the unique role of invisible colleges in higher education.

In 1970, 5.9 percent of the total students in all institutions were in Liberal Arts II colleges. Liberal Arts I colleges enrolled only 2.2 percent of the total. Of those students in the Liberal Arts category only, 84.7 percent were in invisible colleges. Thus, the major portion of students choosing the relative intimacy of the private liberal arts campus was in invisible institutions. Only 2 of 146 Liberal Arts II colleges were publicly controlled (1.4 percent) and only 26 of 573 invisible colleges (4.5 percent) were public (Carnegie Commission, 1973). Since this study is limited to privately controlled Liberal Arts II colleges, comparisons will be made to four-year, private institutions whenever possible.

Of all private, four-year institutions, 77.6 percent are small and of lower selectivity. Table IV.1 shows the percent of students in the selectivity levels. These comparisons are limited to those small

Table IV.1

Percent of All Small, Private Colleges of Low Selectivity (N=489) by Level

Selectivity Level	Percent at Level
4 (SAT scores between 998 and 1074)	34.6
3 (SAT scores between 926 and 977)	31.7
2 (SAT scores between 855 and 925)	16.8
1 (SAT scores of 854 or lower)	16.9

(Astin & Lee, 1972, derived from data, p. 10) private colleges for which selectivity level was available, but the data suggest that the majority of these colleges offer education to students of average achievement who would also qualify for admission to many public institutions.

Of all institutions of higher education in the United States, including those with large enrollments the small, private colleges of selectivity level 4 and below are 39.8 percent of the total number of institutions of lower selectivity. Table IV.2 gives this information by selectivity level.

Table IV.2

Invisible Colleges Compared to All Institutions of Lower Selectivity by Selectivity Level

Selectivity Level	Percent Invisible of All Institutions at Level
4 (SAT scores between 998 and 1074)	49.4
3 (SAT scores between 926 and 977)	46.8
2 (SAT scores between 855 and 925)	30.0
1 (SAT scores of 854 or lower)	29.5

(Astin & Lee, 1972, derived from data, pp. 4-5, 10).

Consequently, it appears that invisible colleges offer options for post-secondary training to a portion of the student population which might otherwise be excluded from higher education if invisible colleges were eliminated.

Invisible colleges also represent a substantial proportion of American institutions responding to special student requirements. Of all institutions of higher education, including universities and all levels of selectivity and enrollment size, 21.3 percent of men only institutions and 50 percent of women only institutions are invisible colleges. Of all private institutions affiliated with religious groups, 42.6 percent are invisible colleges. Of those institutions under Protestant control, 43.6 percent are invisible colleges; Catholic, 43.2 percent; other religious groups, 22.8 percent.

Fall 1973 enrollment figures indicate that 4.6 percent of all students in all institutions of higher education were in invisible colleges. Among all private institutions, 19.9 percent of the enrollment was in invisible colleges, and 31.9 percent of the enrollment in private four-year institutions other than universities was in in invisible colleges. The addition of the students presently in invisible colleges to the enrollment of public four-year institutions would produce an increase of 16.8 percent, resulting in a significant extension in the public financial responsibility for postsecondary education (Data for 1973 from Grant & Lind, 1975).

It is, however, because the small, private liberal arts institution of lower selectivity appears to maintain a precarious existence that this study was undertaken. Of the 545 colleges defined as invisible in this report, 59 or 10.8 percent are no longer functioning institutions. Consequently, within the total context of higher education, the major concern of the study is in the relationships between the live invisible colleges and those that are defunct.

Although the trend in higher education has been away from single-sex institutions, none of the demise colleges was limited to men only. A portion of the demise colleges was for women only, but the greatest proportion of those invisible colleges which are no longer separately functioning institutions were coeducational in their admission policies. This finding suggests that a real place for the single-sex college of lower selectivity may still exist in the total picture of higher education and that single-sex colleges serve a valuable function (See Table IV.3).

Table IV.3

Comparison of Demise * and Live Colleges with Total Invisible Colleges by Sex

Type	Demise		Live		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Male	0	0.0	27	5.0	27	5.0
Female	18	3.3	71	13.0	89	16.3
Coed	41	7.5	387	71.0	428	78.5
No information	0	0.0	1	.2	1	.2
Totals	59	10.8	486	89.2	545	100.0

*Demise classification based on last day of operation data.

A similar pattern can be discerned in relation to religious affiliation. Only 8.5 percent of the demise institutions were affiliated with Protestant denominations; 33.8 percent were controlled by the Catholic church; but the majority, 57.6 percent, were independent of church affiliation (See Table IV.4). Although the numbers in these two comparisons are small, they suggest that the obvious factors of an admissions policy restricted by sex or control of the college by a religious group may not provide a satisfactory explanation for the demise of small, private, liberal arts colleges.

Table IV.4

Comparison of Demise * and Live Colleges with Total Invisible Colleges by Religious Affiliation

Type	Demise		Live		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Catholic	20	3.7	108	19.8	128	23.5
Protestant	5	.9	223	40.9	228	41.8
Other	0	0.0	8	1.5	8	1.5
Independent	34	6.2	139	25.5	174	31.9
No information	0	0.0	8	1.5	8	1.5
Totals	59	10.8	486	89.2	545	100.0

*Demise classification based on last day of operation data.

Regional location provides another facet of the total picture of the failure of invisible colleges. The majority of the remaining live institutions are in the Southeastern United States. Although approximately 12 percent of the failures occurred in this region, these failures represent only about five percent of the invisible colleges within the region. The Mideastern region had the greatest absolute number of failures with 13 of the colleges (22 percent of the failures) and a regional demise rate of 18 percent. The New England region, however, had the highest regional demise rate of approximately 21 percent.

Table IV.5 shows the relationship for demise institutions between enrollment size, residence facilities and location. Approximately 50 percent of the colleges were located in suburban environments; 33 percent in urban areas; and 17.9 percent in rural settings. The majority of colleges provided residence facilities for their students, a condition which may suggest heavy financial obligations for those colleges.

Table IV.5

Distribution of Institutions in Demise Population
According to Size of Student Body, Residence Facilities,
and Location of Institution

FTE Enrollment Range	Residence Facilities by Percent		Location by Percent		
	Resident	Commuter	Rural	Urban	Suburban
1 - 500 (N=39)	89.7	10.2	17.9	33.3	48.7
501 - 100 (N=14)	92.8	7.1	7.1	35.7	57.1
1001 - 1500 (N=4)	75.0	25.0	50.0	25.0	25.0
1501 - 2000 (N=1)	100.0	0	0	0	100.0
2001 - 2500 (N=1)	0	100.0	0	100.0	0
Totals	88.1	10.9	16.9	33.8	49.1

The characteristics cited in Table IV.6 seem to substantiate W. W. Jellema's (1971) observation that the small enrollment base of a number of small private institutions has, in part, created a financial dilemma for many invisible colleges. The largest number of colleges that either closed, merged, or became public institutions were those with an enrollment base of 1 - 500 (FTE enrollment). By contrast, only two colleges with an enrollment base of 1500 or more failed. The distribution of data according to size of college shows an interesting and perhaps important picture of the schools with a small enrollment base. For example, only 21 of these colleges (53.8 percent of the 39 with the smallest enrollment base) were accredited. This figure is

Table IV.6

Distribution of Institutions in Demise Population According to Size of Student Body, Type of Demise, and Accreditation

FTE Enrollment Range	Type of Demise by Percent			Accredited by a by a Regional Association
	Merged	Closed	Became Public Institution	
1 - 500 (N=39)	30.7	69.2	0.0	53.8
501 - 1000 (N=14)	28.6	50.0	21.4	71.4
1001 - 1500 (N=4)	25.0	50.0	25.0	100.0
1501 - 2000 (N=1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
2001 - 2500 (N=1)	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
All Levels (N=59)	28.8	62.7	8.5	61.0

below the number for the total sample. Of the 59 defunct colleges, 61 percent were institutions accredited by a regional association. It is also important to note that none of the colleges with the smallest enrollment base became public institutions.

Table IV.7 gives further information on the characteristics of the demise population by enrollment base. At the smallest enrollment level, 48.7 percent of the colleges were those with a religious affiliation. Of these 84.2 percent were Roman Catholic and 15.8 percent were Protestant. At all enrollment levels, however, at least half of the failures were independent, coeducational colleges.

A comparison of the enrollment bases of the defunct institutions with the distribution of enrollment bases of the total invisible

Table IV.7

Distribution of Institutions in Demise Population According to Size and Sex of Student Body, and Control of Institution

FTE Enrollment Range	Sex of Student Body by Percent			Control by Percent	
	Women's Colleges	Men's Colleges	Coed Colleges	Religious	Independent
1 - 500 (N=39)	38.4	0.0	61.5	48.7	51.2
501 - 1000 (N=14)	21.4	0.0	78.5	28.6	71.4
1001 - 1500 (N=4)	0.0	0.0	100.0	50.0	50.0
1501 - 2000 (N=1)	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0

population of which they were once a part shows more clearly the delicate survival position of colleges with very small student bodies (Table IV.8).

Table IV.8

Distribution of Institutions in Demise and Live Populations According to Size of Student Body

FTE Enrollment Range	Percent of Total (N=545)	
	Demised	Live
1 - 500 (N=159)	24.5	75.5
501 - 1000 (N=246)	5.7	93.9
1001 - 1500 (N=108)	3.7	96.3
1501 - 2000 (N=25)	4.0	96.0
2001 - and over (N=7)	14.3	85.7

Although the enrollment divisions used by Astin and Lee (1972) differ from those in this study, their data comparing size of enrollment with selectivity level provide a context into which the demise information may be placed. The data which they use is from 1968, a year in which the defunct schools in this study were still operating and, consequently should be included in the categories. (See Table IV,9).

Table IV.9

Enrollment Category by Lower Selectivity Levels for Private, Four-Year Colleges

Enrollment Range	Percent in Selectivity Level			
	4	3	2	1
1 - 499 (N=68)	29.4	27.9	22.1	20.6
500 - 999 (N=207)	29.0	31.4	19.3	20.3
1000 - 2499 (N=214)	41.6	33.2	12.6	12.6

These figures suggest that the larger the college, the less likely it is to offer admission to students of lower achievement levels. There are, unfortunately, no selectivity level figures available for the defunct and live institutions in this study.

The relationships between founding dates, control, and sex of student body are presented in Table IV.10. It appears that within the group of 59 colleges two trends emerged in the establishment of colleges between 1870 and 1970. First, during the 1931-1960 period the majority of schools were founded by religious groups, but after 1961 the trend was reversed, and most of the colleges were founded with independent status. Secondly, in the 1931-1960 period, the newly established institutions were almost equally split between women's colleges and coeducational institutions. However, all of the institutions founded after 1961 were coeducational. Specifically, between 1931-1960, 76.4 percent of the fifty-nine new institutions had

Table IV.10

Distribution of Institutions in Demise Population
According to Founding Date, Control, and Sex of Student Body

Founding Date	Sex of Student Body by Percent			Control by Percent		
	Women's Colleges	Men's Colleges	Coed Colleges	Roman Catholic	Protes-tant*	Indepen-dent
Before 1870 (N=10)	30.0	0.0	70.0	30.0	0.0	70.0
1871 - 1900 (N=11)	36.4	0.0	63.6	27.2	18.1	54.5
1901 - 1930 (N=7)	28.6	0.0	71.4	14.2	14.2	71.4
1931 - 1960 (N=17)	52.9	0.0	47.1	70.6	5.9	23.5
1961 - 1970 (N=14)	0.0	0.0	100.0	7.1	7.1	85.7
Totals (N=59)	30.5	0.0	69.5	33.9	8.5	57.6

a religious affiliation. Of these, 47.1 percent were coeducational, but the majority of these new colleges were for women only. After 1961, 14 more colleges were established. Of these 85.7 percent were under independent control and all were coeducational.

Length of existence appears to be a factor in the fate of the 59 colleges studied (See Table IV.11). Sixty-one percent of the colleges were no more than sixty years old, and of those only 25 percent continued in another form. Of colleges more than sixty years old,

Table IV.11

Distribution of Institutions in Demise Population According to Age of College and Type of Demise

Age in Years at Closing, Merger, or Other Change in Status	Type of Demise by Percent		
	Merged	Closed	Became Public Institutions
1 - 20 (N=22)	13.6	81.8	4.5
21 - 40 (N=8)	37.5	62.5	0.0
41 - 60 (N=6)	16.7	66.7	16.7
61 - 80 (N=5)	80.0	20.0	0.0
81 - 100 (N=8)	25.0	62.5	12.5
Over 100 (N=10)	40.0	40.0	20.0
Totals (N=59)	28.8	62.7	[illegible].5

however, 56.5 percent continue to exist in a changed status. Exactly what this finding implies would have to be determined by further analysis. It is more likely that age itself was not the major differentiating factor, but that attributes that accompany institutional age, such as an extensive physical plant and a long standing reputation, made the older institutions sufficiently valuable to be incorporated in other institutions or to be assumed by the state.

Another factor which appears highly significant in determining the survival or demise of invisible colleges is the educational and general cost per student. Table IV.12 compares figures from NCHEMS and from this study.

Table IV.12

*Per Student Educational and General Expenditure

Type of Institution	Per Student Cost in Dollars
All Public Institutions	2,898
All Private Institutions	4,036
All Private, Four-Year Institutions	3,108
Defunct Invisible Colleges	4,064
Live Invisible Colleges	2,407

These comparisons tend to support the line of inquiry followed in this study into the relative operating ratios of existing invisible colleges as an index of their viability. The low average expenditure level maintained by the live invisible colleges suggests that financial management may prove to be a key element in those colleges which have continued in operation.

This attempt to define the position of the invisible college within the context of American higher education has been only moderately successful. One problem is the reluctance of some private colleges to report information about their operations. Of the 796 institutions

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* The averages for all institutions taken from the study by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) on State and Local Support of Higher Education, 1973-74, based on data collected by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) and maintained in their EDSTAT II system.

which Astin and Lee (1972) report as providing no estimate on their selectivity levels, 22.7 percent were private colleges and 83.8 percent had enrollments of less than 2500 students. Of the private colleges whose selectivity levels were reported as unknown, 96.1 percent had enrollments of less than 2500 students. Thus, there is much information lacking on all small colleges and on small, private colleges in particular. However, although the measurements available are general and imprecise, it appears that invisible colleges do serve the needs of a specific group of American students, and because of this, invisible colleges have a valuable and unique place in the total scheme of American postsecondary education.

Definitions

Professional programs as defined by the Education Directory are programs of at least four years beyond high school outside liberal arts and general education, and organized around a professionally oriented academic discipline. Included are four or five year degree programs in agriculture, business administration, engineering, etc., as well as those programs leading to the six-year or more first-professional degree defined in the section which deals with highest level of offering.

Teacher preparatory programs are those of at least four years' duration.

Liberal arts refer to four or five year baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate degree programs in the liberal arts and sciences. Liberal arts programs may also include preprofessional programs.

The control or affiliation of each college is recorded as reported by the institution to the U. S. Office of Education. Public institutions are those under Federal, State, State-related, local or State and local control. Private institutions are reported as independent, non-profit; organized as profit-making; or affiliated with a religious group.

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CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL RATIOS OF DEMISE AND LIVE INVISIBLE COLLEGES

CHAPTER V

Analysis of Financial Ratios of Demise and Live Invisible Colleges

by William Anderson, Janice McBee and Lois Beeken

This phase of study was designed to provide an analysis of the demise and live invisible colleges using financial ratios. One objective of this investigation was to identify differences between the ratios of the two groups of colleges. Another was to establish a statistical profile of the demise colleges using financial operating ratios and then test this profile against the live invisible colleges to determine if any of the live invisible colleges had a statistical profile like the demise colleges. It was hoped that the development of a statistical precedure such as this would aid in predicting the institutions that could be in financial trouble.

A data base for the demise and live invisible colleges was established by extracting data elements from the HEGIS data tapes maintained by the National Educational Data Library. Data for the demise institutions are for the next to or last fiscal year that the institutions existed. The data were adjusted to comparable 1973 price levels using the inflation rates in The Higher Education Price Index. Data for the live invisible colleges are for the 1973 fiscal year.

Although more than 70 private liberal arts colleges have gone out of business, merged, or become publicly controlled since 1969, only 59 of the institutions were selected for this study. Most of the defunct colleges excluded from the study were seminaries and not solely liberal arts colleges. Four colleges were excluded because data for this these institutions were not available.

Five of the demise institutions included in the group of 59 invisible colleges in this study were originally classified as elite institutions. They are:

New College (Florida)
Mount Saint Agnes College (Maryland)
Newton College of the Sacred Heart (Massachusetts)
Mary Rodgers College (New York)
Mary Manse College (Ohio)

These institutions were included in the study because their statistical profiles, based upon data used in this report, were not significantly different from the statistical profiles of the other colleges that failed. Additionally, the Carnegie code classification does not always provide a clear-cut distinction between types of institutions, as noted in the April, 1973, report Governance of Higher Education, p. 130. In many cases, it is "necessarily a matter of judgment."

A total of 544 colleges were included in this study. The live invisible colleges totaled 485, while 59 of the demise colleges were included.

Table V.1 and V.2 present characteristic data of the 544 colleges in this study. The characteristic categories are presented in the left hand column. The number of demise institutions for each category is presented in the column entitled "demise" while the live invisible institutions are presented in the column entitled "invisible." The third column, "all invisible and demise," is a sum of the first two columns. Table V.1 presents a vertical percentage distribution of the institutions by characteristic category, and Table V.2 presents a

TABLE V.1 RATIOS OF DEMISE AND LIVE INVISIBLE TO TOTAL INVISIBLE

	DEMISE		LIVE INVISIBLE		INVISIBLE/DEMISE	
CARNEGIE CLASS	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio
ELITE	5	1.000	0	0.000	5	1.000
INVISIBLE	54	0.100	485	0.900	539	1.000
REGION DISTRIBUTION						
NEW ENGLAND	9	0.205	35	0.795	44	1.000
MID EAST	13	0.181	59	0.819	72	1.000
GREAT LAKES	10	0.100	90	0.900	100	1.000
PLAINS	11	0.122	79	0.878	90	1.000
SOUTHEAST	7	0.046	146	0.954	153	1.000
SOUTHWEST	4	0.125	28	0.875	32	1.000
ROCKY MOUNTAINS	0	0.000	8	1.000	8	1.000
FAR WEST	5	0.114	39	0.886	44	1.000
OUTLYING AREAS	0	0.000	1	1.000	1	1.000
RACE OF STUDENTS						
WHITE	58	0.117	439	0.883	497	1.000
NEGRO	1	0.022	45	0.978	46	1.000
INSTITUTIONAL TYPE						
UNIVERSITY	0	0.000	1	1.000	1	1.000
OTHER 4 YEAR	59	0.109	484	0.891	543	1.000
2 YEAR	0	1.000	0	1.000	0	1.000
SEX OF STUDENTS						
MALE	0	0.000	27	1.000	27	1.000
FEMALE	24	0.253	71	0.747	95	1.000
COED	34	0.082	381	0.918	415	1.000
COORDINATE	1	0.167	5	0.833	6	1.000
HIGHEST LEVEL OF OFFERING						
2, LESS THAN 4 YRS	0	1.000	0	1.000	0	1.000
4-5 YR BACCALRTE	56	0.122	402	0.878	458	1.000
1ST PROFESSIONAL	2	0.286	5	0.714	7	1.000
MASTERS	1	0.015	66	0.985	67	1.000
LESS THAN PH.D.	0	0.000	4	1.000	4	1.000
DOCTORATE	0	0.000	6	1.000	6	1.000
NON-DEGREE UGRAD	0	0.000	1	1.000	1	1.000
NON-DEGREE GRAD	0	1.000	0	1.000	0	1.000
POST PH.D. RESEARCH	0	1.000	0	1.000	0	1.000
OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING?						
NO	56	0.110	451	0.890	507	1.000
YES	3	0.081	34	0.919	37	1.000
TWO YEAR PROGRAM?						
NO	59	0.109	481	0.891	540	1.000
YES	0	0.000	4	1.000	4	1.000
TEACHERS PROGRAM?						
NO	29	0.232	96	0.768	125	1.000
YES	30	0.072	389	0.928	419	1.000
PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM?						
NO	53	0.120	390	0.880	443	1.000
YES	6	0.059	95	0.941	101	1.000

TABLE V.1 (CON'T)

	DEMISE		INVISIBLE		INVISIBLE/DEMISE	
FALL HEADCOUNT FULL - TIME	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio
0 - 200	19	0.358	34	0.642	53	1.000
201 - 500	24	0.185	106	0.815	130	1.000
501 - 1000	11	0.046	229	0.954	240	1.000
1001 - 1500	4	0.043	88	0.957	92	1.000
1501 - 2000	1	0.038	25	0.962	26	1.000
2001 - 2500	0	0.000	3	1.000	3	1.000
2501 - 3000	0	1.000	0	1.000	0	1.000
OVER 3000	0	1.000	0	1.000	0	1.000
FALL HEADCOUNT PART - TIME						
0 - 200	50	0.118	373	0.882	423	1.000
201 - 500	7	0.079	82	0.921	89	1.000
501 - 1000	1	0.042	23	0.958	24	1.000
1001 - 1500	0	0.000	5	1.000	5	1.000
1501 - 2000	0	1.000	0	1.000	0	1.000
2001 - 2500	0	1.000	0	1.000	0	1.000
2501 - 3000	0	0.000	1	1.000	1	1.000
OVER 3000						
TOTAL FALL HEADCOUNT						
0 - 200	15	0.455	18	0.545	33	1.000
201 - 500	20	0.204	78	0.796	98	1.000
501 - 1000	16	0.066	225	0.934	241	1.000
1001 - 1500	5	0.045	107	0.955	112	1.000
1501 - 2000	2	0.045	42	0.955	44	1.000
2001 - 2500	0	0.000	9	1.000	9	1.000
2501 - 3000	0	0.000	2	1.000	2	1.000
OVER 3000	1	0.200	4	0.800	5	1.000
FTE STUDENTS						
0 - 200	16	0.372	27	0.628	43	1.000
201 - 500	23	0.198	93	0.802	116	1.000
501 - 1000	14	0.057	231	0.943	245	1.000
1001 - 1500	4	0.037	104	0.963	108	1.000
1501 - 2000	1	0.040	24	0.960	25	1.000
2001 - 2500	0	0.000	4	1.000	4	1.000
2501 - 3000	1	0.500	1	0.500	2	1.000
OVER 3000	0	0.000	1	1.000	1	1.000

TABLE V.2 RATIO OF DEMISE, LIVE, AND TOTAL POPULATION TO TOTAL EACH CATEGORY

	DEMISE		LIVE INVISIBLE		INVISIBLE/DEMISE	
	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio
CARNEGIE CLASS						
ELITE	5	0.085	0	0.000	5	0.009
INVISIBLE	54	0.915	485	1.000	539	0.991
REGION DISTRIBUTION						
NEW ENGLAND	9	0.153	35	0.072	44	0.081
MID EAST	13	0.220	59	0.122	72	0.132
GREAT LAKES	10	0.169	90	0.186	100	0.184
PLAINS	11	0.186	79	0.163	90	0.165
SOUTHEAST	7	0.119	146	0.301	153	0.281
SOUTHWEST	4	0.068	28	0.058	32	0.059
ROCKY MOUNTAINS	0	0.000	8	0.016	8	0.015
FAR WEST	5	0.085	39	0.080	44	0.081
OUTLYING AREAS	0	0.000	1	0.002	1	0.002
RACE OF STUDENTS						
WHITE	58	0.983	439	0.907	497	0.915
NEGRO	1	0.017	45	0.093	46	0.085
INSTITUTIONAL TYPE						
UNIVERSITY	0	0.000	1	0.002	1	0.002
OTHER 4 YEAR	59	1.000	484	0.998	543	0.998
2 YEAR	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000
SEX OF STUDENTS						
MALE	0	0.000	27	0.056	27	0.050
FEMALE	24	0.407	71	0.147	95	0.175
COED	34	0.576	381	0.787	415	0.764
COORDINATE	1	0.017	5	0.010	6	0.011
HIGHEST LEVEL OF OFFERING						
2, LESS THAN 4 YRS	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000
4-5 YR BACCALRTE	56	0.949	402	0.831	458	0.843
1ST PROFESSIONAL	2	0.034	5	0.010	7	0.013
MASTERS	1	0.017	66	0.136	67	0.123
LESS THAN PH.D.	0	0.000	4	0.008	4	0.007
DOCTORATE	0	0.000	6	0.012	6	0.011
NON-DEGREE UGRAD	0	0.000	1	0.002	1	0.002
NON-DEGREE GRAD	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000
POST PH.D. RESEARCH	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000
OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING?						
NO	56	0.949	451	0.930	507	0.932
YES	3	0.051	34	0.070	37	0.068
TWO YEAR PROGRAM?						
NO	59	1.000	481	0.992	540	0.993
YES	0	0.000	4	0.008	4	0.007
TEACHERS PROGRAM?						
NO	29	0.492	96	0.198	125	0.230
YES	30	0.508	389	0.802	419	0.770
PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM?						
NO	53	0.898	390	0.804	443	0.814
YES	6	0.102	95	0.196	101	0.186

TABLE V.2 (CON'T)

	DEMISE		INVISIBLE		INVISIBLE/DEMISE	
	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio
FALL HEADCOUNT FULL - TIME						
0 - 200	19	0.322	34	0.070	53	0.097
201 - 500	24	0.407	106	0.219	130	0.239
501 - 1000	11	0.186	229	0.472	240	0.441
1001 - 1500	4	0.068	88	0.181	92	0.169
1501 - 2000	1	0.017	25	0.052	26	0.048
2001 - 2500	0	0.000	3	0.006	3	0.006
2501 - 3000	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000
OVER 3000	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000
FALL HEADCOUNT PART - TIME						
0 - 200	50	0.847	373	0.769	423	0.778
201 - 500	7	0.119	82	0.169	89	0.164
501 - 1000	1	0.017	23	0.047	24	0.044
1001 - 1500	0	0.000	5	0.010	5	0.009
1501 - 2000	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000
2501 - 3000	0	0.000	1	0.002	1	0.002
OVER 3000	1	0.017	1	0.002	2	0.004
TOTAL FALL HEADCOUNT						
0 - 200	15	0.254	18	0.037	33	0.061
201 - 500	20	0.339	78	0.161	98	0.180
501 - 1000	16	0.271	225	0.464	241	0.443
1001 - 1500	5	0.085	107	0.221	112	0.206
1501 - 2000	2	0.034	42	0.087	44	0.081
2001 - 2500	0	0.000	9	0.019	9	0.017
2501 - 3000	0	0.000	2	0.004	2	0.004
OVER 3000	1	0.017	4	0.008	5	0.009
FTE STUDENTS						
0 - 200	16	0.271	27	0.056	43	0.079
201 - 500	23	0.390	93	0.192	116	0.213
501 - 1000	14	0.237	231	0.476	245	0.450
1001 - 1500	4	0.068	104	0.214	108	0.199
1501 - 2000	1	0.017	24	0.049	25	0.046
2001 - 2500	0	0.000	4	0.008	4	0.007
2501 - 3000	1	0.017	1	0.002	2	0.004
OVER 3000	0	0.000	1	0.002	1	0.002

horizontal percentage distribution for each characteristic category. The data presented in these tables are self descriptive; therefore, the following discussion will be limited to a review of significant points that are the subject of the statistical profile analysis.

Tables V.1 and V.2 shows that colleges with a small enrollment had the greatest rate of failure. Of the total number of colleges which failed, 72 percent had a fall headcount full-time enrollment of 500 or less. This figure represents 20 percent of the population in the 0-500 category. In contrast, only five percent of the population in the 500 or greater category failed.

As would be expected, the small, private, liberal arts college, unlike community colleges and an increasing number of public four-year colleges, relies almost exclusively on full-time students. Over 95 percent of the demise and over 90 percent of the live invisible institutions enrolled less than 500 part-time students.

Those institutions that served primarily females have an increased chance of failure. Twenty-four of the women's colleges failed, or 40 percent of the total demise population were women's colleges. In contrast, none of the reamining 27 men's institutions failed and only 8 percent of the coed institutions.

Academic program characteristics of the defunct population indicate that the small, private, liberal arts colleges closely resembled the total population in the limited range of program offerings. This apparent lack of program diversification seems consistent with the general profile of the small liberal arts colleges. Seventy-seven percent of the total population had teacher training programs. Only 7 percent of the total population offering such programs died; 23 percent of those without such programs died. Of the 59 dead institutions only three offered occupational training, and only six of the 59 offered a professional program.

Operating Ratios

In addition to the above data, 16 financial operating ratios were calculated for each of the 544 institutions in the study. The use of financial ratios for balance sheet analysis is limited for a number reasons. The financial data for calculating these ratios were drawn from the Higher Education General Information System. The data for this system are reported by the institution and are not audited. It was necessary to exclude a number of data elements because the figures reported did not appear reasonable.

In the early stages of the study, over 50 different operating ratios were calculated; however, this number was reduced to 16 ratios for several reasons. A number of the original 50 ratios were deleted because they did not seem to be significant. The Panel of Experts that advised on the project, composed of individuals extremely knowledgeable about the operation of liberal arts colleges, played an important role in selecting the ratios. The 16 financial operating ratios are presented in Table V.3.

Several of the ratios highlight the operating efficiency of the two groups of colleges. The educational and general costs per full-time equivalent student as presented by ratio number 11 of Table V.3 averaged $4,059 for the demise colleges and $2,407 for the live invisible institutions. These costs dramatically reveal the different operating efficiency levels of the two groups of institutions.

Although the demise institutions had a much higher per full-time equivalent student educational and general costs than the invisible

Table V.3 Selected Operating Ratios

1. Current Fund Expenditures/ Current Funds Revenue	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	1.057	0.986
Median	1.000	0.990
Std. Dev.	0.222	0.110
Min.	0.482	0.328
Max.	2.213	1.689
Cases	59	485

2. E + G Expenditures/ E + G Revenue	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	1.066	0.952
Median	1.006	0.947
Std. Dev.	0.298	0.149
Min.	0.314	0.354
Max.	2.585	1.755
Cases	59	485

3. Current Fund Expenditures/ E + G Revenue	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	1.401	1.377
Median	1.371	1.371
Std. Dev.	0.368	0.286
Min.	0.717	0.462
Max.	3.040	4.670
Cases	59	485

4. House + Food Expenditures/ House + Food Revenue	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	0.897	0.908
Median	0.854	0.904
Std. Dev.	0.341	0.274
Min.	0.445	0.041
Max.	2.402	3.550
Cases	47	464

5. Student Aid Expenditures/ Student Aid Revenue	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	18.337	3.865
Median	1.425	1.771
Std. Dev.	87.784	19.677
Min.	0.283	0.137
Max.	588.014	397.048
Cases	46	431

6. Auxiliary Expenditures/ Auxiliary Revenue	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	0.984	1.005
Median	0.869	0.954
Std. Dev.	0.535	0.926
Min.	0.480	0.035
Max.	4.165	20.171
Cases	52	476

7. Private Gifts E + G Revenue/ Total E + G Revenue	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	0.281	0.213
Median	0.269	0.185
Std. Dev.	0.210	0.154
Min.	0.003	0.001
Max.	0.766	0.892
Cases	34	475

8. E + G Tuition Revenue/ Total E + G Revenue	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	0.611	[illegible]
Median	0.648	0.682
Std. Dev.	0.252	0.183
Min.	0.052	0.048
Max.	1.000	1.000
Cases	59	484

9. E + G Tuition Revenue/ FTE Students	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	2428.244	1558.720
Median	1434.899	1523.306
Std. Dev.	5105.156	496.785
Min.	159.371	168.441
Max.	37282.927	5773.904
Cases	59	483

10. E + G Priv. Gifts/ FTE Students	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	981.644	[illegible]
Median	645.450	429.170
Std. Dev.	1008.775	743.642
Min.	3.928	1.812
Max.	4012.500	10162.013
Cases	34	474

11. E + G Total Expenditures/ FTE Students

	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	4059.300	2407.136
Median	2795.841	2271.303
Std. Dev.	5956.999	1089.430
Min.	681.829	246.246
Max.	44022.309	15660.062
Cases	59	484

12. Endowment Book Val./ FTE Students

	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	3367.052	2983.916
Median	2024.055	2553.315
Std. Dev.	3672.491	2290.869
Min.	12.413	26.640
Max.	15418.201	18000.000
Cases	42	446

13. I + D.R. E + G Expenditures/ Total E + G Expenditures

	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	0.417	0.432
Median	0.411	0.433
Std. Dev.	0.098	0.094
Min.	0.240	0.030
Max.	0.654	0.832
Cases	57	480

14. Plant MNT E + G Expenditures/ Total Current Fund Expenditures

	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	0.118	0.093
Median	0.105	0.084
Std. Dev.	0.065	0.038
Min.	0.028	0.027
Max.	0.351	0.240
Cases	59	484

15. Library E + G Expenditures/ Total E + G Expenditures

	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	0.058	0.053
Median	0.052	0.050
Std. Dev.	0.028	0.019
Min.	0.011	0.005
Max.	0.161	0.160
Cases	58	484

16. Plant Debt Payments/ Plant Debt End Balance

	Demise Colleges	Live Invisible Colleges
Mean	0.268	0.909
Median	0.101	0.455
Std. Dev.	0.345	2.141
Min.	0.003	0.000
Max.	1.350	21.165
Cases	41	439

colleges, the Percent of total educational and general expenditures allotted to instruction and departmental research was 41.4 percent for the demise colleges and 43.2 percent for the live invisible colleges. The difference in the values of ratio 11 and ratio 13 is due in part by the declining enrollment situation at most of the demise colleges.

The total expenditures for student aid (ratios) were eighteen times the total student aid revenue for the demise colleges. The corresponding ratio was 3.8 to 1 for the live invisible colleges. This pattern is at least partially the result of increased financial aid pressures generated by the need to attract additional students to these colleges.

It was hypothesized that if a statistical profile using the 16 operating ratios could be developed for the demise college group, this profile could be tested against each of the live invisible colleges to determine the number of live colleges that resembled the demise institutions. Several different statistical methods were used for this investigation.

Univariate F-tests, stepwise discriminant analysis, and cluster analysis were completed using the 16 operating ratios as independent variables. The use of inferential statistics when the whole population is sampled is supported by Kish (1959) if the emphasis of the interpretation of results is descriptive. "Significance should stand for meaning and refer to substantive matter. The statistical tests merely answer the question: Is there a big enough relationship here which needs explanation (and is not merely chance fluctuation)?" (Kish, 1959).

For each ratio the null hypothesis, that the set of demise colleges are a sample from the population of invisible colleges was tested.

Univariate F-tests were computed using each of the ratios as an independent variable. Because the independent variables are operating ratios and are interrelated, an adjusted alpha level for the entire set of data was recomputed, $\alpha = 1-(1-\alpha_0)^K$ using $\alpha_0 = .01$ and $K=16$. (Kramer, 1972). The resultant alpha is 0.16. At $\alpha = 0.16$ demise and invisible colleges differed significantly on ratios 1 (Current Fund Expenditures/ Current Funds Revenue), 2 (E + G Expenditures/ E + G Revenue), 4 (House + Food Expenditures/House + Food Revenue), 9 (E + G Tuition Revenue/FTE Students), 11 (E + G Total Expenditures/FTE Students), and 14 (Plant MNT E + G Expenditures/Total Current Fund Expenditures).

Stepwide discriminant analysis (SPSS, Nie, et al., 1975) was run on the 485 invisible and 59 demise colleges using all sixteen ratios as independent variables. The resultant discriminant function is:

$$\begin{aligned} y = {} & -0.09226R_2 + 0.01892R_3 + 0.01298R_4 - 0.00016R_5 \\ & +0.11745R_7 + 0.07223R_8 - 0.10019R_{14} - 0.19417R_{15} \\ & +0.00340R_{16} + 0.00977 \end{aligned}$$

Although the resultant discriminant funciton accounts for 18.9% of the variance in the group, nevertheless 84.19% of the colleges were classified correctly. (See Table V.4) By group, 69.5% & 86.0% of the demise and invisible colleges respectively were classified correctly. This implies that the sixteen ratios may not be the only discriminators between the demise and invisible colleges. On the other hand, the classification resulting from the discriminant function is significant at alpha equal 0.1 The discriminant function succeeds in dividing the two groups. A college is classified as demise or alive by its corresponding value in the discriminant equation. This provides an aspect of the prediction model.

Table V.4

Prediction Results

Actual Group	No. of cases	Predicted Group Membership	
		Demise	Alive
Demise	59	41 (69.5%)	18 (30.5%)
Alive	485	68 (14.0%)	417 (86.0%)

In addition to the discriminant analysis, the Baker Cluster Analysis Program (Baker, 1972) was run utilizing the 16 operating ratios for each institution in this study. Cluster analysis is a method of grouping entities based upon relevant criteria (variables). The grouping option used in the cluster analysis for this study is an agglomerative hierarchical technique which groups entities. In a linear fashion, individuals or groups of individuals which are most similar are paired. Similarity is defined in terms of a generalized distance, Mahalanobis D^2, $D^2 = (X_{ij} - X_{ik})' \Sigma^{-1} (X_{ij} - X_{ik})$, where Σ is the pooled within groups variance covariance matrix, and X_{ij} and X_{ik} are the vectors of scores for entities j and k. Mahalanobis D^2 allows for correlations between variables. If those correlations are zero, it is equivalent to Euclidean distance measured using standardized variables (Everitt, 1974).

The grouping method used in this study is the Johnson maximum linkage, also knows as the furthest neighbor or complete linkage technique. The distance between groups is defined as the distance between their most remote pair of individuals. (See for example, Sokal and Sneath, 1963; Johnson, 1967; Lance and Williams, 1966). That is, this grouping algorithm produces clusters in which the diameters are the maximum distance between pairs of objects in the cluster (Johnson, 1967).

The results from the cluster analysis indicated that the demise and alive colleges do not constitute two well-defined groups. Generally, a few demise colleges were clustered with two large predominately alive clusters. Two smaller clusters were made up of four members from each of the groups. One five member cluster had three demise and two alive colleges. These ten alive colleges may be in financial difficulty. Eighteen demise colleges do not have much similarity with more than one other demise college. Seven alive colleges are similar with at most one other invisible college. The demise and live colleges are not two homogeneous groups. The cluster analysis used in this study groups colleges pairwise, and unlike the discriminant analysis, group membership is not taken into consideration in the computations. This explains the discrepencies, with respect to mis-classifications, between the two analyses.

Demise and live colleges differ on several of the ratios. In part this difference may be attributed to the large variance of the ratios with respect to the two groups. The demise and live colleges constitute two hetereogenous groups.

Further exploratory analysis seems appropriate in order to investigate the characteristics of the subgroups within the demise and invisible small, private, liberal arts college populations. It appears that factors such as type of institutional control, size of enrollment, breadth of academic offerings, diversity of mission, and effectiveness and efficiency of the institutional management team should be incorporated in a predictive model in order to define more adequately the subgroupings.

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CHAPTER VI

GOVERNMENTAL INTERVENTION: NEEDS AND CONSTRAINTS

GOVERNMENTAL INTERVENTION - NEEDS AND CONSTRAINTS

by Burton D. Friedman

Within the United States there are nationwide and statewide systems of postsecondary and higher education. Within higher education, there are institutions that were created and sponsored by private groups as well as others that were established and are sponsored by our city, state and federal governments. All institutions of higher education are deemed to be performing a useful and necessary public or civic service.

Whether public or private in their origins, colleges and universities perform the socially useful and necessary service of supplying each year a new crop of educated youth. This is beneficial to society at large. It also is beneficial, to be sure, to the individuals among the youth so educated.

Colleges and universities, howevermuch they may be lumped together as "higher education," are not all alike. They differ in institutional sponsorship, of course. They differ also in size, environment, objectives, programs and other respects. Collectively, they yield a socially useful good. Individually, they offer diverse options among which each student may make a choice, so that the diversity among individual human beings is reflected in a diversity among institutions. Small, private, liberal arts colleges comprise one subset within higher education, and there is diversity also within their subset: diversity of location, setting, size, environment, sponsorship, objectives, programs, methods. With the rest of higher education, they too perform a social or civic task.

Survival and Nobler Ends

At present, all of privately sponsored higher education is experiencing financial problems. In some cases these are severe and in others comparatively mild. In a few cases they have been fatal.

Even when financial problems are not necessarily fatal, if they are serious they become intrusive and possible disruptive and damaging. Mere survival is a not very dignified purpose to pursue, but survival obviously is a prerequisite for the pursuit of educational ends. A college always has problems with respect to the definition and pursuit of purpose. When in a financial crunch, financial problems tend to overshadow "purpose" problems as survival or maintenance becomes more urgent than institutional enhancement. Money matters intrude upon and may cause changes to come about in institutional objectives, the institution's educational offerings and the portion of the student "market" that the college undertakes to serve. Distortion may result.

Income from tuition and other fees is the basic source of funds for private institutions. It is supplemented by endowment earnings, gifts and grants, and other income sources. Tuition rates have been rising, as an obvious route to increase institutional income. However, those rates have been rising faster than per capita disposable income in the United States. Many students and their families are unable to pay at the higher rates. That fact increases the pressure for financial assistance to students. Tuition receipts from those students who can pay are insufficient to cover the full costs of their education and also to contribute to financial assistance for others.

Individual and institutional private philanthropy has been insufficient to fill the gap between tuition income and total costs. The traditional middle class clientele of many colleges finds itself increasingly unable to pay the tuition fees at their higher levels, yet unable to qualify for many of the forms of financial assistance now available for students. The combination of forces--financial forces--tends to separate some colleges from their usual audience, thereby increasing the difficulty of survival and thereby also creating pressure for new definitions of purpose and of educational offerings.

Governmental Intervention

Other sources of institutional income being insufficient, the small, private, liberal arts college is forced to turn to seek public support in the form of income derived from government. If it is accepted that the colleges serve a useful and necessary public purpose, governmental support is justified. The question is whether governmental support can be provided to privately-sponsored higher education without at the same time undermining its independence--which is the condition that enables private colleges and universities to create and maintain our vaunted diversity with respect to size, environment, objectives, programs and other factors.

The federal and state governments, generally speaking, have accepted the view that it is appropriate for government to help support the privately-sponsored segment of higher education. State governments, on the whole, have been more effective than the federal government in acting on that basis. Each state sponsors and supports a system of public higher education. Many states help to support private colleges and universities within their statewide systems of higher education, either directly or indirectly. In a state where there is no private higher education, of course, the problem does not arise. In a few states, constitutional obstacles still stand in the way. No fewer than 39 states, however, have found one or more ways to assist private colleges and universities to continue to perform their socially-useful tasks. The federal government also is engaged in similar efforts. All of the governments continue to consider how (as well as whether) best to supply assistance to the private institutions without undermining their independence.

Student Aid, Institutional Support

There are several basic routes that have been utilized. First, there is governmental financial assistance to individual students, either in the form of outright gifts or grants or in the form of guaranteed financial loans. Financial assistance to the individual enables the individual to pay tuition and fees to the college attended. The tuition and fees paid by the government-subsidized student become income to the institution. To the extent that tuition and fees are a basic source of institutional funds, logically, this may be seen as governmental support to the institutions attended. When government-subsidized students elect to attend a small, private, liberal arts college, government to that extent may be deemed to be "supporting" the college.

The support thus indirectly supplied does not necessarily constitute assistance to the institution, however. Tuition and fees do not cover all costs. If "costs" should be $2,500 and each student pays, let us say, $2,000, there is a $500 gap between income and expense. That gap is covered by other college income, e.g., gifts, grants and endowment earnings. Assume that a college aims for an enrollment of 1,000 students. Knowing fairly well its probable income from sources other than tuition and fees, and budgeting its planned expenditures, it can set tuition and fees at a level that will permit it to break even. If its "volume of business" were allowed to increase--i.e., if it allows enrollment to exceed 1,000--the college may find itself in financial difficulties. It does not gain by increasing volume. It [illegible].

At a privately-sponsored college, in short, the student is partly subsidized by private philanthropy even though the student pays the stipulated total of tuition and fees. If the student is further subsidized by government, so that the tuition and fees can be paid, that governmental contribution is not necessarily a benefit to the college.

Second, therefore, governments have undertaken to make grants or other forms of institutional aid directly to privately-supported colleges and universities. For example, some states make special contributions in support of education related to health care; this category of support is generally not important to small, private, liberal arts colleges. Others make grants to the institutions in proportion to the numbers of state residents that attend the institutions; in some cases, the grant follows the student across state lines.

Student aid and direct grants are the principal forms of governmental assistance to private higher education. They are not the only forms, however, although they are the oldest and most direct and straightforward. (The Colony and later the Commonwealth of Massachusetts contributed funds to found Harvard and later to support it, for example.)

Several varieties of state action are designed to reduce college expenses rather than to subsidize them. For example, a state may establish a method for financing the construction and maintenance of facilities in higher education statewide, so that colleges and universities may borrow funds obtained from tax-free borrowing. Private institutions have been granted tax exemption from gasoline and sales taxes, to cite other examples. In some cases, states have aided private institutions to increase their income from private philanthropy, by special treatment for income tax credit purposes of gifts made by individuals or corporations.

State governments have undertaken to provide financial support to interinstitutional cooperative undertakings. These also may serve to reduce expenses for the participating private colleges and universities. Some state governments also have begun (or, in limited numbers of cases, continued) to take private institutions into account in the process of planning for their statewide systems of higher education. In New York, for example, the state's education agency is also recognized as the University of the State of New York, in one sense a university without a campus, but in another sense a university that includes all colleges and universities, public and private, within the statewide system of higher education.

The federal government has utilized several means to help support private colleges and universities. The income tax system makes private philanthropy easier than it might otherwise be; to some extent, that may be deemed to encourage such philanthropy. More directly, the federal government provides money for grants, loans and the guarantee of loans to students and, in some selected cases, grants to "developing" institutions.

Unfair Competition, Natural Selection and Other Considerations

Together, the federal and state governments face several major questions regarding support to private colleges and universities in general and to the small, private, liberal arts colleges in particular:

First, there is the question whether to support them or simply to permit the market to decide which shall survive and which others shall wither. There is ample reason to believe that the private institutions constitute a national resource of importance, that they perform a useful and necessary social, public or civic service, and that they should not be allowed--as a class--to wither away. There is also is ample reason to believe that the market is not a fair one and that, without governmental intervention, the private institutions are in danger of great reduction if not extinction. For these reasons, governments may choose to continue or increase their efforts to enable private colleges and universities to thrive.

Second, there is the perhaps more difficult question of how to lend support, assuming that support is to be offered.

It seems clear enough that aid to students and direct aid to institutions are separable matters, however closely related they may be. Students that want to attend college may need financial assistance to do so, particularly if the colleges they choose are private ones. The difference in the levels of tuition fees may double or treble the cost to a student who attends a private rather than public college. Governments have chosen to assist many students with financial aid. Pressures are building for governments to assist more students, and for governments not to limit their assistance to students from low-income families. Whether via grants or loans, governmental financial aid to students does constitute one means of lending support to higher education, directly to the students and indirectly to the institutions.

Direct support to institutions is a more difficult matter. If small, private, liberal arts colleges are in difficulties, for example, governments may choose to ease their problems. That constructive urge encounters its own difficulties. There remains a wish that the market itself shall prevail. To the extent that it does, there will continue to be institutions that gradually fail to attract and retain students, that wither, and that die. Many have died in the past, and at least in some cases, that probably was a matter of good riddance. If governments should choose to help small, private, liberal arts colleges it would be unfortunate if their help interfered unduly with a process of natural selection.

The amount of help required varies from case to case, in total for the given college and in terms of amount per student enrolled. It is predictably difficult to be even-handed in the award of financial assistance. It is predictably difficult to select an overall level of support that will not discourage, rather than encourage, private contributions.

One possibility, now in use, is that of direct grants to institutions, that constitute supplements to the amounts paid by students in attendance. If it costs a state $2,000 per student to provide undergraduate education at a state-sponsored, public college, for example, one may say that the state government is disposed to spend that amount per year on the education of one resident of the state; ignore, for the moment, the matter of out-of-pocket costs to the student. If the student enrolls at a private college within the state, or at any public or private college out of state, it is not unreasonable to suggest that some part of the state's contribution to that student's education should follow the student to the college of his or her choice. After all, it may be more economical for government to support ongoing operations that it is to create new institutions.

The purposes to be kept in mind are easily stated, though difficult to pursue simultaneously. On the one hand, there is the purpose of assuring opportunity broadly to all members of society, regardless of their family income levels, to obtain the benefits of higher education if they wish to do so. That purpose is readily translated into low tuition fees and public institutions. On the other hand, there is the companion purpose of assuring diversity within higher education, hence a broad range of alternative opportunities to the student. That purpose, in turn, is readily translated into preservation of the privately-sponsored, privately-founded colleges and universities. Opportunity and choice are key words.

A third purpose is that of assuring continuity and stability in the conditions surrounding not only the marketplace served by all institutions of higher education but also the type and intensity of governmental intervention within that market. If governments decide to play the game, they have to commit themselves to stay in the game. Otherwise, institutions will become dependent upon governmental contributions and, if those contributions should slow down substantially or dry up at the source, will find themselves in desperate circumstances.

A fourth purpose is that of intruding as little as possible upon the nature and content of the offerings--in terms of location, setting, environment, purpose, programs, and other conditions--at each privately-sponsored college or university. The private institutions in general--and perhaps the small, private, liberal arts colleges in particular--provide much of the desired diversity within U. S. higher education. Different colleges offer different attractions and attract differing clienteles. That diversity is regarded as a virtue and a strength, not so much in terms of what any given college may offer, but in terms of what the entire nationwide system of colleges has to offer. The conditions of governmental assistance--e.g., excessive emphasis upon state of residence--could alter circumstances, even though unintentionally, and could reduce the degree of diversity. The "affirmative action" and "church-state separation" themes, to cite other obvious possible pitfalls, also could intrude upon the prospects for success in governmental efforts to assist private higher education.

APPENDICES

* APPENDIX A

RATIOS OF DEMISE INSTITUTIONS

*omitted because of confidential nature of material

* APPENDIX B

RATIOS OF INVISIBLE INSTITUTIONS

*omitted because of confidential nature of material

APPENDIX C

FIELD STUDY GUIDE

FIELD STUDY GUIDE

PART I

OBJECTIVES OF FIELD STUDIES

To construct a factual history of selected institutions and the role each played in higher education, particularly during the final two to five years of its existence.

SUGGESTED DOCUMENTATIONS TO SEEK

Catalogs, annual reports, newspaper accounts of its demise; state charter and/or corporative records and reports; merger agreements; bankruptcy proceedings; enrollment, fiscal and historical records; self-study reports and records filed with accrediting agencies.

SUGGESTED INTERVIEWEES

Former trustees; former college presidents; comptroller; principal fund raiser; dean of students; dean of instruction; selected faculty alumni and patrons; key members of the community, including editor of the local newspaper, town leaders; knowledgeable members of state commission on higher education; and secretaries of an association of a private college in which the college may have held membership.

TYPE OF INTERVIEW

Hypothesis testing, semi-structured. In all likelihood several documentation research/interview sessions will be required. Ideally, several research interviewers will be involved in the interviews and will cross-check and integrate their information. Whenever possible, please tape record interviews.

Please record on interview notes and tapes, who was interviewed, by whom, where, and when. Please try to get the telephone number and locations of other potential sources of information.

HYPOTHESES TO TEST

The following is of an initial list of hypotheses. It is anticipated that additional hypotheses will be developed by the field study teams before, during, and after research. This is also a "wish list." We can not expect to answer all the questions for all of the institutions because of time and lack of information. Moreover, the reasons for some colleges' closing will be so overwhelmingly obvious that a minimal amount of research will be required to validate the hypotheses.

1. The college was closed as a result of a policy decision by top management of the institution with which it was affiliated. Try to find the reasons for this policy decision. For example: lack of a viable mission. The college was primarily engaged in teacher education. The college's mission, style, student life, management, etc., was antithetical to the governing institutions' policy.
2. The college was closed as a result of community pressure for reasons cited above.
3. The college was unable to react effectively to increased competitive pressure. For example, a community college with low tuition, opened in the community and recruited the same type of students as the former college.
4. The college was guilty of overly-optimistic planning. The college over-staffed or over-built facilities during a period of peak enrollment. In the late fifties and early sixties, enrollment demand exceeded capacity. Many colleges were undoubtedly tempted and encouraged to respond to what has proved to be a short-range demand.
5. The college was unable to reduce staff or programs because of collective bargaining agreements, tenure, faculty pressure, community pressure, or tender-hearted management.

6. The college attempted to be too much to too many. For example: the college may have tried to offer too many programs or majors because of an unrealistic mission. For example, it may have wanted to be a comprehensive liberal arts college, but lacked the basic enrollment to support faculty in all the required areas.

7. The college's former market dried up due to changes in the demography of the community, new lifestyles, etc. For example, a college located in and drawing its students primarily from a middle-class church going community would probably find itself stranded if the community radically changed, as has happened in many large cities, from white middle-class to black or Spanish speaking lower middle-class.

8. The college was strongly supported by alumni donations and this source of funding dried up because alumni became disenchanted with the college, retired, were not in money creating occupations, etc.

9. The college was caught between the hammer of increasing cost and anvil of fixed student tuition and fees because its students were drawn from families with only slow-rising or declining, (in real dollars) income.

10. The college had inadequate financial management. Possible examples inlude poor yield on endowments, excessively large endowment losses, faculty salaries higher than local or national average for similar institutions, student aid expenditures in excess of student aid revenues; under-utilization of housing capacity; inadequate control of purchases; inadequate budgeting procedures; high losses per student coupled with drive for volume.

11. The mission of the college was unclear to administrators and faculty as shown by acceptance standards,

under-enrolled programs, attrition rates, faculty or administration turn-over, morale.

12. Lack of articulation with community colleges and secondary schools as feeders to the college.

13. Declining enrollment and/or high attrition due to poor student services, development, and relationships.

14. The faculty could not relate to the student because it did not understand or agree with the mission of the college or its students. What were grading and admission practices? Was teaching effectiveness evaluated? Age of faculty? Qualification? Did the college have a faculty development program? Did faculty in the smaller schools have inter-disciplinary capability? Check teaching and advisement loads, number of advisors assigned. Classroom contact hours, etc.

15. The college could not obtain accreditation. Why? Was the lack of accreditation a serious factor? When did such lack become serious?

In testing these hypotheses and others that are developed as we progress, we should also look at the quality of management. For example:

1. Clarity and consensus on mission and goals.
2. How fund raising was organized. Was the president the principal fund-raiser? Did he have an inside man to run the school if he spent most of his time in fund raising activities?
3. Was the president a leader? Did he reflect and relate well to faculty, staff, trustees, and alumni?
4. Was he too little or too much innovative in relationship to the college's constituency?
5. Management style of the president.

6. Did the college have a policy and procedures manual?

7. Did the college have flexibility in curriculum? If not, why?

EFFECT OF CLOSING QUESTIONS

What was the loss when the college merged or closed?

A. Loss of mission. Did a merger or closing eliminate a necessary mission resource?

B. Were students with special interests forced to go a long way from home, possibly to a more expensive school, to find a college that met their needs?

C. Were facilities lost that had to be replaced by public facilities?

D. Was a substantial private burden for education shifted to the public?

E. Did the community lose in respect to library, cultural events, out-of-state or out-of-community students?

F. How did the community feel about the closing? Did it even know about the college? Does it have a sense of loss?

FIELD STUDY GUIDE

PART II

To: Faculty Interviewer
"Study of Cause for the Demise of the Small Private Liberal Arts College in the United States"

This survey form may be useful in gathering information. Please use if it does not inhibit you or the dynamics of gathering worth while information.

Please seek the following documentation:

Annual Reports
Catalogs
Accreditation reports
Newspaper accounts

To: ______________________________

VPI&SU is studying the "Causes for the Demise of the Small, Private, Liberal Arts College in the United States," under a contract from the U. S. Office of Education. To assist us in this study would you please complete the following questionaire and supplement it with any additional remarks that you feel would be helpful in the study. At your request, we will keep the source confidential. It would be deeply appreciated if you could provide the following documentation as well as completing the survey:

Annual Reports
Catalogs
Accreditation reports
Newspaper accounts

Demise of Small College"

Interview Sheet

(1) Interviewers:____
____
____
____

(2) Interviewees:____________ ______________________________
Address and Phone #____ ______________________________
____
____
Title at closing:______________________________
Title now:______________________________

(3) Assets at closing:______________

(4) Debts at closing:______________

(5) Net:______________

(6) Enrollment at closing: Men______ Women______ Total_______
Ethnic Mix : Cau______ Black______ Oriental_____
Spanish surnames______ Other_______

(7) Enrollment: Peak year______: Men______ Women______

(8) Ownership. Always independent: Yes___ No___
If no - Founded by: Who________________
When________________
When did it go independent____________
How______________________________
____
____
Why______________________________
____
____

Does it still receive institutional support:Yes___ No___

From whom____________________

How much____________________

Type of control____________________

Governing board____________________

____

____

(9) Where did the majority of operating funds come from:

Peak year______ Endowment income____________________

Tuition____________________

Other____________________

Total operating revenue____________________

Total operating expenditures____________________

Closing year

______ Endowment income____________________

Tuition____________________

Other____________________

Total operating revenue____________________

Total operating expenditures____________________

(10) What four colleges in the area did you consider as major competition:

Peak year:

Name:____________________

Location:____________________

Estimated enrollment: Peak year____________________

Closing year____________________

Name:____________________

Location:____________________

Estimated enrollment: Peak year____________________

Closing year____________________

Name:____________________

Location:____________________

Estimated enrollment: Peak year____________________

Closing year____________________

Name: ____________________

Location: ____________________

Estimated enrollment: Peak year ____________________

Closing year ____________________

Remarks: ____________________

____

____

____

(11) Student profile:

Peak year

Age: Mean ______ Range ______ Men ______ % Women ______ %

Mean SAT ______ Range ______

Mean ACT ______ Range ______

Socio-economic group: ____________________

Mean family income: ____________________

Commuter ______ % Resident ______ %

Closing year

Age: Mean ______ Range ______ Men ______ % Women ______ %

Mean SAT ______ Range ______

Mean ACT ______ Range ______

Socio-economic group: ____________________

Mean family income: ____________________

Commuter ______ % Resident ______ %

(12) Major programs of study:

Peak year ____________________

____

____

Closing year ____________________

____

____

(12) Alumni:

	Peak year	Closing year
Average age		
Average income		
Number of active alumni		

Occupations

(13) Merger or Closing History:

How

With whom

Students went where

Faculty went where

Remarks:

(14) Accreditation agency: History

(15) Other possible sources of information:

Former Title
Current Position

Name:
Address:
Tele. #

Name:
Address:
Tele.#

Name:
Address:
Tele. #

Name:
Address:
Tele. #

Name:
Address:
Tele. #

Name:
Address:
Tele. #

Name:
Address:
Tele. #

Name:
Address:
Tele. #

Name:
Address:
Tele. #

(16) Documentation:

Annual Reports ______________________________
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Catalogs ______________________________
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Accreditation reports ______________________________
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Newspaper accounts ______________________________
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Etc. ______________________________
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____

APPENDIX D

DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS

Auxiliary Enterprises - Housing and Food Services: Revenue received from the operation of housing and food services.

Auxiliary Expenditures - Housing and Food Services: Total expenditures for all housing and food services including physical plant charges, general institutional expenses, administrative charges, and other indirect costs.

Demise Colleges: The 60 small, private, liberal arts colleges included in this study that have gone out of business, merged with another institution, or became a public institution since 1968.

Educational and General Expenditures: Total expenditures for the following categories: Instruction and departmental research, organized activities related to educational departments; sponsored research; other separately budgeted research; other sponsored programs; extension and public service; libraries; physical plant maintenance and operation; and other educational and general.

Educational and General Revenue: Total revenue received from the following sources: student tuition and fees; governmental appropriations; endowment income; private gifts; sponsored research; other separately budgeted research; other sponsored programs; recovery of indirect costs; sales and services of educational department; organized activities related to educational departments; and other sources.

F.T.E. Students: The full-time-equivalent student enrollment obtained by adding one-third of the part-time head-count enrollment to the total full-time head-count enrollment.

Instruction and Departmental Research Expenditures: Includes all expenditures of the departments, colleges, schools and instructional divisions of the institution.

Invisible Colleges: Those small, private, liberal arts colleges currently operating that have a Carnegie classification of 3.2 (Liberal Arts Colleges - Selectivity II).

Library Expenditures: The total expenditures for separately organized libraries, both general and departmental. Includes expenditures for operating expenses, books, subscriptions, etc.

Physical Plant Maintenance and Operation Expenditures: Includes salaries, supplies, materials, and other expenditures for maintenance and operation of all facilities except those properly charged to auxiliary enterprises and organized activities relating to instructional departments.

Plant Debt Ending Balance: The balance owed on indebtedness principal at the end of the fiscal year.

Plant Debt Payments: All payments expended to reduce the principal of plant loans, regardless of the source of funds.

Private Gifts: All funds given to the institution by any non-governmental source.

Student Aid Grants Expenditures: Includes all expenditures for student aid grants, scholarships, and fellowships to students for which no services or repayments are required of the student.

Student Aid Grants - Total: All grants, scholarships, and fellowships for students for which no services or repayments are required of the students.

Student Tuition and Fees: Total revenue received from all tuition and fees assessed against students for educational and general purposes.

Total Current Funds Expenditures: All expenditures for educational and general expenditures; student aid grants; major service programs, and auxiliary enterprises.

Total Current Funds Revenues: All funds received from educational and general sources; student aid sources; major service programs; and all auxiliary enterprise sources.

Value of Endowment at the End of the Fiscal Year - Book Value: The value shown on the accounting records of an institution at the end of the fiscal year of all endowment, term-endowment, and quasi-endowment funds.

APPENDIX E

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